CAO's Nogis backs gillnet fishing on Saipan. PAGE 2
Man accused of license fraud claims he was not advised of his rights. PAGE 5

Hafa Adai!

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Saipan Tribune

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Gov't terminates MSA contract

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI administration terminated yesterday its $8 million sole-source contract with the startup interisland airline Marianas Southern Airways, citing a lack of funding, but MSA hopes that the CNMI government can come up with a solution other than termination for the sake of the CNMI community.

» 'We're hoping we can work something out'

See MSA on Page 4

United's Saipan-Guam flights are now pricier

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

United Airlines is known to be on the pricier side in terms of air service from Saipan to Guam. However, as of late, United's ticket prices have reached an all-time high at nearly $600 for a roundtrip fare.

Concerned citizens have reached out to *Saipan Tribune* regarding United's recent increase in ticket prices.

See PRICIER on Page 4

Cardiac arrest cause of Cinta Kaipat's death

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Former representative Cinta M. Kaipat unexpectedly passed away last Wednesday reportedly due to cardiac arrest, according to a family member.

» Lawmakers share memories of Kaipat

Kaipat

In response to *Saipan Tribune*'s request for information, a family member disclosed yesterday afternoon that Kaipat, 61, died due to cardiac arrest at the Commonwealth Health Center Wednesday.

The family member said there will be a daily Mass starting last night, Thursday, at 6pm at the St. Jude Church in Koblerville, and Mt. Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa and Kristo Rai in Garapan, both at 6am starting today, Friday.

See CARDIAC on Page 4

Are we ready? Part III

SPECIAL REPORT

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI invested millions of dollars into the resumption of tourism—our only economic driver—but that hasn't turned out as planned due to other factors, one of which was the forced closure of many of the CNMI's establishments, many of which remain closed to this day, leaving many to wonder; are we even ready for the return of tourists?

See ARE WE on Page 4

The once-lively streets of Paseo de Marianas have been reduced to rubble and have been closed off to the public as it is a construction site.

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Step up your game and spruce up your wardrobe at the Next Level Thrift and Consignment Shop.
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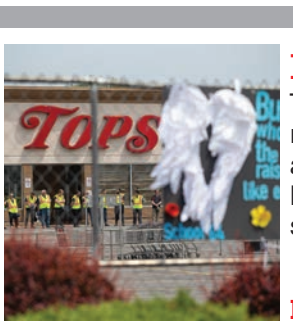

NATION
The number of U.S. mass killings was at least three times higher than the total since the 1970s.
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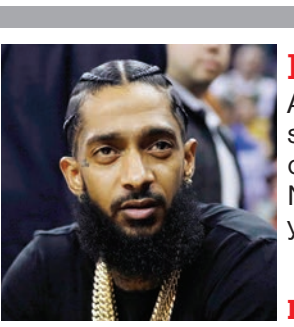

LIFE & STYLE
A Los Angeles judge sentenced the man convicted of killing Nipsey Hussle to 60 years to life in prison.
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Local

CAO's Nogis backs gillnet fishing

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In supporting a bill that would authorize the use of gillnet or Saipan and the Northern Islands, Felix Nogis, the special assistant for the Carolinian Affairs Office, said that the CNMI's ancestors have been practicing gillnet fishing or "tekking" throughout the years.

"As a result, such technique has become part of our custom to both Chamorros and Refaluwasch community," said Nogis in his written testimony.

Antonio B. Cabrera, a former port manager for the Commonwealth Ports Authority, on the other hand, opposes the bill, saying gillnet can be a highly destructive and indiscriminate form of fishing that threatens fish populations and other marine resources.

» Cabera, Reyes oppose bill

A fisherman, Robert P. Reyes, said he acknowledges the intent of the legislation, but he feels gillnet fishing will be detrimental to the CNMI marine fish population, ecosystem, and may affect tourism.

Rep. Denita K. Yangetmai (D-Saipan) introduced the gillnet fishing bill, House Bill 23-5, which is now before the House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee, which has incorporated some amendments as requested by the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Nogis

Under the bill, gillnets will be regulated by the Department of Lands and Natural Resources. A Northern Zone and Southern Zone on Saipan will be created where such net fishing method will be permitted.

The Northern Zone may run from Pau Pau Beach south to the Cabrera Commercial Center in Garapan and gillnet fishing will be allowed in odd-numbered months of a calendar year.

Southern Zone may cover the area south of the Cabrera Commercial Center in Garapan to Pak Pak Beach Park in San Antonio and will allow this fishing method in even-numbered months of the calendar year.

During the committee members' meeting Wednesday, Rep. John Paul Sablan (Ind-Saipan) said that since Yangetmai agrees with incorporating the DFW's recommendations, they need to call an official committee meeting to adopt this version, H.B. 23-5, HD1, before doing any public hearing on the bill.

Sablan said this is needed so when they call for a public hearing, people already know the changes made in the legislation and they can provide comments on H.B. 23-5, HD1.

Sablan told Camacho that the next move would be for Camacho to call for an official committee meeting toy adopt this House draft version.

In his testimony, Nogis said a legitimate concern was raised in past years regarding the sustainability of fish population and, accordingly, the CNMI established marine sanctuaries to ensure consistent and adequate marine life throughout the islands, which people fully supported. He noted that this bill, at its present form maintains the existence of the marine sanctuaries.

In explaining the method in using gillnets, Nogis said

See NOGIS on Page 4

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there is a general meeting on February 25, 2023, at 6:30 pm, at the Pavilion on Beach Road across from JP Center. Your attendance is greatly appreciated.
Agenda: 40th Class Reunion

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OPA recommendation for DLNR to plan to repair Outer Cove Marina unresolved

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Office of the Public Auditor has found that its 2021 audit recommendation for the Department of Lands and Natural Resources to meet with stakeholders to establish an action plan to restore the Outer Cove Marina remains unresolved.

The same applies to OPA's 2021 audit recommendation for DLNR to identify and establish safety standards for the Outer Cover Marina.

OPA has tracked 36 unresolved audit and inspection recommendations to various government agencies as of Dec. 31, 2022.

OPA said that DLNR restated on Dec. 7, 2022, their need for funding to build a breakwater. DLNR said the breakwater aims to provide cover from storms that will threaten ongoing construction/repair projects.

The breakwater will turn the Outer Cove Marina into a sheltering site for vessels that seek refuse from future disastrous weather.

OPA said they will follow up on DLNR's progress toward addressing the recommendation in the next reporting period.

On OPA's recommendation to identify and establish safety standards, OPA said on Dec. 7, 2022, DLNR responded that to resolve the issue, the first recommendation will need to be addressed appropriately.

DLNR said the central government is not able to furnish the funds requested in its Nov. 24, 2021 letter to the Department of Finance for $5 million for fiscal year 2022.

As corrective action, DLNR in its Nov. 24 letter, asked Finance for $5 million to initiate the bidding process for an Architectural and Engineering firm and a construction company to build the breakwater. Finance agrees to assist, but a funding source has yet to be identified.

OPA is hoping that the change in administration will allow Finance to stay committed to helping DLNR identify a source of funding in fiscal year 2023 to tackle the tasks of removing collapsed walkways and other unsafe structure; the installation of a security fence around the dock to increase safety and prevent unauthorized berthing/usage; and adding surveillance cameras and solar-powered lamps throughout the marina to help deter vandalism or abuse of the facility in the future.

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS
Northern Marianas College president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero gives the keynote address for the Saipan Chamber of Commerce Economic Forum, where he advocated for building intellectual capital in the CNMI. Deleon Guerrero provided three solutions to increasing the CNMI's intellectual capacity: accelerated cohort-based programs with experiential-based credits and interdisciplinary courses, increasing academic research capacity, and investing in the reskilling and upskilling the workforce through the college's Community Development Institute. In addition, Deleon Guerrero also emphasized the college's commitment to cultivating entrepreneurship and business growth through the CNMI Small Business Development Center, while harnessing agricultural and aquacultural programs at NMC's Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services to diversify food industries and increase food security in the CNMI. NMC

MSA

From Page 1

The Department of Finance announced on Feb. 21 that it would be terminating the $8 million sole-source contract that the previous Torres administration had with MSA, technically called Marianas Pacific Express LLC.

Following the announcement, MSA president Keith Stewart said he has met with CNMI legislators and representatives of the administration to possibly maintain the contract or to work something out in order to maintain the contract because it would ultimately affect the CNMI community.

In addition, Stewart clarified that there were no under-the-table deals between MSA and the previous administration. As far as he is concerned, MSA was approached to submit a proposal during the time when interisland service was suspended back in 2021, and they were chosen and given a contract.

"We were told that several airlines were approached when one airline had stopped providing service. So the emergency solution was to start up [another] commuter airline. I had no idea and we had nothing to do with that. As for the contract, [it] was approved by the attorney general, there were no 'backdoor deals,' it was all legal. We were approached, we submitted a proposal, and we were given a contract," he said.

Stewart also touched on rumors about a possible suspension of flights on MSA's part but he said there were no such announcements and he does not want to speculate.

"We're not going to speculate about what will happen. We'll wait until we know more," Stewart said.

Meanwhile, a statement from the office of Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said he said he fully recognizes the seriousness of any decision to end this contract, but there is just no money to support this $8-million sole-source deal.

"Former governor Torres overcommitted the Commonwealth and overpromised money we did not have then and do not have now. Under the terms of the MSA contract, the deal may be terminated if there is no money for it. The sole-source contract was executed in March 2022 in the amount of $8 million for interisland air and cargo passenger service between Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam. On Aug. 16, Aug. 30, and twice on Nov. 10, 2022, the Commonwealth government issued advance payments to MSA that totaled approximately $2.4 million, including $1.5 million for startup costs. The source of funding was federal money awarded to the Commonwealth through the American Rescue Plan Act. My administration is still assessing the extent of ARPA mismanagement, but what is crystal clear at this point is that these funds were misspent and overspent and ARPA accounts are now in deficit in the tens of millions of dollars," Palacios stated.

Palacios also questioned the fairness of the contract. "Equally disturbing to the lack of funds to support this sole-source contract, I question the fairness and wisdom of issuing such a lucrative agreement to a new private venture when an existing competing vendor was already providing the same service and was not offered a similar opportunity. We want our Commonwealth to be a place where all businesses know they can operate and compete on a level playing field."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CARDIAC

From Page 1

Funeral rites will be on March 2.

Kaipat's sudden passing elicited a lot of memories among her former colleagues, friends, families, and acquaintances.

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) said yesterday that she will miss Kaipat's warm "Hi E" greeting and her beautiful smile. Deleon Guerrero said the first time she met Kaipat was in 2006 when she (DeLeon Guerrero) was appointed as a Work Investment Agency director.

Since then they have become good friends and, in fact, just a few months ago they spent time with some friends privately socializing and singing as her backup vocals, she added.

"I want to remember my friend Cinta from these last few months back where we were laughing, catching up, and just having so much fun in each other's company. Fly away and sing with the angels, my friend," DeLeon Guerrero said.

House of Representatives vice speaker Joel Camacho (Ind-Saipan) said yesterday that he worked with Kaipat when he was a senior legislative assistant for the Legislature Bureau. Camacho said he has always known her for her passion and kindred spirit with regards to CNMI lands and people.

He said Kaipat was a strong supporter and advocate for the protection and preservation of the Northern Islands.

"She will be missed and remembered by many and I am truly honored to have known her in my life," Camacho said.

Rep. Julie A. Ogo, (Ind-Rota), said in her social media post yesterday that, on behalf of her staff, the people of Rota, and the people of the CNMI, she expresses sincere condolences to the family of Kaipat.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to the surviving families and friends," Ogo said.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

ARE WE

From Page 1

When driving around Saipan, almost everywhere you look, you'll notice once thriving establishments that have closed up shop and remain closed to this day. The lavish dole-out of government funds has not exactly made it easy for these establishments to reopen.

In addition, you'll also see resorts that have been forced to close its doors to the public due to the unforeseen circumstances brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. The once charming Kanoa Resort, for example, remains on standby in case of another COVID-19 surge. The Mariana Resort & Spa remains offline.

The once-bustling Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC Resort Casino in Garapan was also one of the CNMI's most controversial tourist spots but today, its once mesmerizing interior is gloomy and almost spooky after being closed for more than two years. At night, the place resembles a ghost town—creepy and dark. In the southern side of Saipan, the San Antonio Resort to this day remains unfinished and is an eyesore.

The most saddening sight of all is the Paseo de Marianas. The once-crowded square is now merely a shadow of what it once was. The once-lively streets of Paseo de Marianas have been reduced to rubble and it has been closed off to the public as it is a construction site.

However, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. According to CNMI Office of Planning and Development deputy director and Garapan Revitalization Task Force chair Christopher A. Concepcion, although Paseo seems to be in ruins right now, the means will justify the ends as the revitalization of the Garapan Square will ultimately transform the Garapan Core into a premier destination.

"The Garapan Revitalization Project aims to transform the Garapan Core into a premier family-friendly destination, featuring a wide range of shopping, dining, entertainment, civic and commercial uses in a world-class beach resort setting that is attractive for visitors and residents," he said.

The long-term goal of the project, Concepcion said, is to make Garapan Square even better than before.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

PRICIER

From Page 1

According to United Airlines' website, a roundtrip economy ticket from Saipan to Guam now ranges from $580 to $587.

According to frequent United travelers, the average ticket from Saipan to Guam usually ranges between $300 to roughly $400 for roundtrip. Now, at nearly $600, it has nearly doubled.

United has yet to issue a statement about the change in their airfare prices.

Commonwealth Ports Authority Kimberlyn King-Hinds said that CPA is unaware of the decision behind the increase in rates and it could have been a business decision on United's part.

"Obviously we want to see reasonable rates and fares and for United, it was probably a business decision and I don't know what all that entails. Obviously as a resident, you want to be able to travel at a lower cost and now it's really cost-prohibitive. Last I checked, it's now $600 to go to Guam. That's expensive for a little over a 30-minute plane ride," she said.

As far as helping the airlines bring down their rates, King-Hinds said that would be difficult because if an incentive is offered to one airline, it has to be offered to all the airlines and it's just not monetarily possible, given CPA's current financial standing.

"We have to be very careful about the types of incentives that we offer because if we offer one person something, we need to offer it to everybody. As to directly reaching out to an airline, we have been cautioned by the federal authorities because that could be seen as incentivizing one over the other and you do have other airlines flying to Guam, to include Marianas Southern Airways and Star Marianas," she said.

The CNMI has other options with commercial carriers like Marianas Southern Airways and Star Marianas.

NOGIS

From Page 2

that *tekking* distinguishes the size of the catch according to the size of the mesh or the eye of the net.

Secondly, he said, it is environmentally friendly as it does not destroy marine habitats because they don't set the nets on corrals, rock, and sea grass.

Thirdly, Nogis said, they don't drag the net, which destroys plant and algae.

Cabrera said that in places where gillnet fishing is allowed, they have strict regulations, monitoring, and enforcement system to control properly and safely such activity so that their marine environment will not be threatened.

"It's enough that we don't have much budget to operate and manage the CNMI Fish and Wildlife Division properly. Now we are going to expand more it's operation. [It's] not making sense with this bill," said Cabrera in his written testimony.

Since banning *tekking* and scuba fishing, Reyes said he personally has seen an increase in fish populations that the community continues to enjoy when fishing inside the lagoons using rods and reels, both on boat or by the shore.

"Approving this bill will change things drastically and we will definitely see a lot of abuse if not properly regulated, therefore I oppose it wholeheartedly," said Reyes as he also cited in his written testimony some issues, including as to who will actually police this law.

ROTARIAN FROM MONTANA

Rotarian Brett Doney, third from right, attends a meeting of the Saipan Rotary Club at Giovanni's at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. Others in the photo are Dr. Nelson Krum, SAA Mario Valentino, acting secretary Brian Clayton, director Mary Grace Bautista, acting president Jessy Loomis, PP/director Greg Borja, and treasurer Charles Cepeda. Doney is a member of the Great Falls Montana Club. He serves as president and CEO of the Great Falls Development Alliance, a nonprofit regional economic development organization and Community Development Financial Institution. Doney has been a professional economic developer for 38 years. He is visiting Saipan for the third time as a volunteer of the International Economic Development Council.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Man accused of license fraud claims that he was not advised of his rights

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In support of his request to suppress prior statements, a man who is facing federal charges for license fraud is claiming that he was not properly advised of his rights when he was interrogated by Homeland Security investigators.

According to Bonifacio "Boni" Sagana's lawyer, Richard Miller, he claims that the government is portraying HSI agents as bending over backward to make sure Sagana understood his rights. However, this allegedly was not true.

"If that were the case, they would have read him his rights in his native [language] Tagalog, a language that is spoken widely in Saipan. Moreover, significant factual disputes exist which require an evidentiary hearing. Sagana has asserted in his sworn declaration that he was not advised of his rights and that under the particular circumstances of his interrogation at the HSI office, he did not feel free to leave. He has also disputed whether any questioning or statements took place in the police car on the way to his home in Chalan Piao," he said.

In addition, Miller stated that from the start of the interrogation, HSI officers had already accused Sagana of lying and of covering up the extent of his involvement in helping Filipinos obtain CNMI driver's licenses.

"At the HSI office, [special agents] reviewed the written statement that had been typed up for Sagana to sign, [the agent] again implicitly accused Sagana of lying when he warned 'that it was a crime to lie to federal agents.' He then confronted Sagana with a photo lineup and statement exhibits of co-defendants and witnesses identifying Sagana as that person. The word 'co-defendants' shows that already at the time of this interview, special agents regarded Sagana as a criminally accused defendant, not merely as a suspect or a person of interest," said the lawyer.

According to court documents, the U.S. District Court for the NMI issued an arrest warrant for Sagana following a grand jury indictment back on Jan. 31, on the charge of conspiring with others to unlawfully produce a CNMI driver's license.

However, Sagana fled the CNMI before he could be arrested and was only taken into custody last May 16 in Wisconsin.

Sagana was allegedly identified by other defendants facing the same charges as the person who arranged for them to fraudulently obtain a CNMI driver's license using a counterfeit U.S. immigration visa number.

According to documents from the Eastern District Court of Wisconsin, Sagana, a U.S. permanent resident, appeared at an initial hearing on May 16, before judge James R. Sickel.

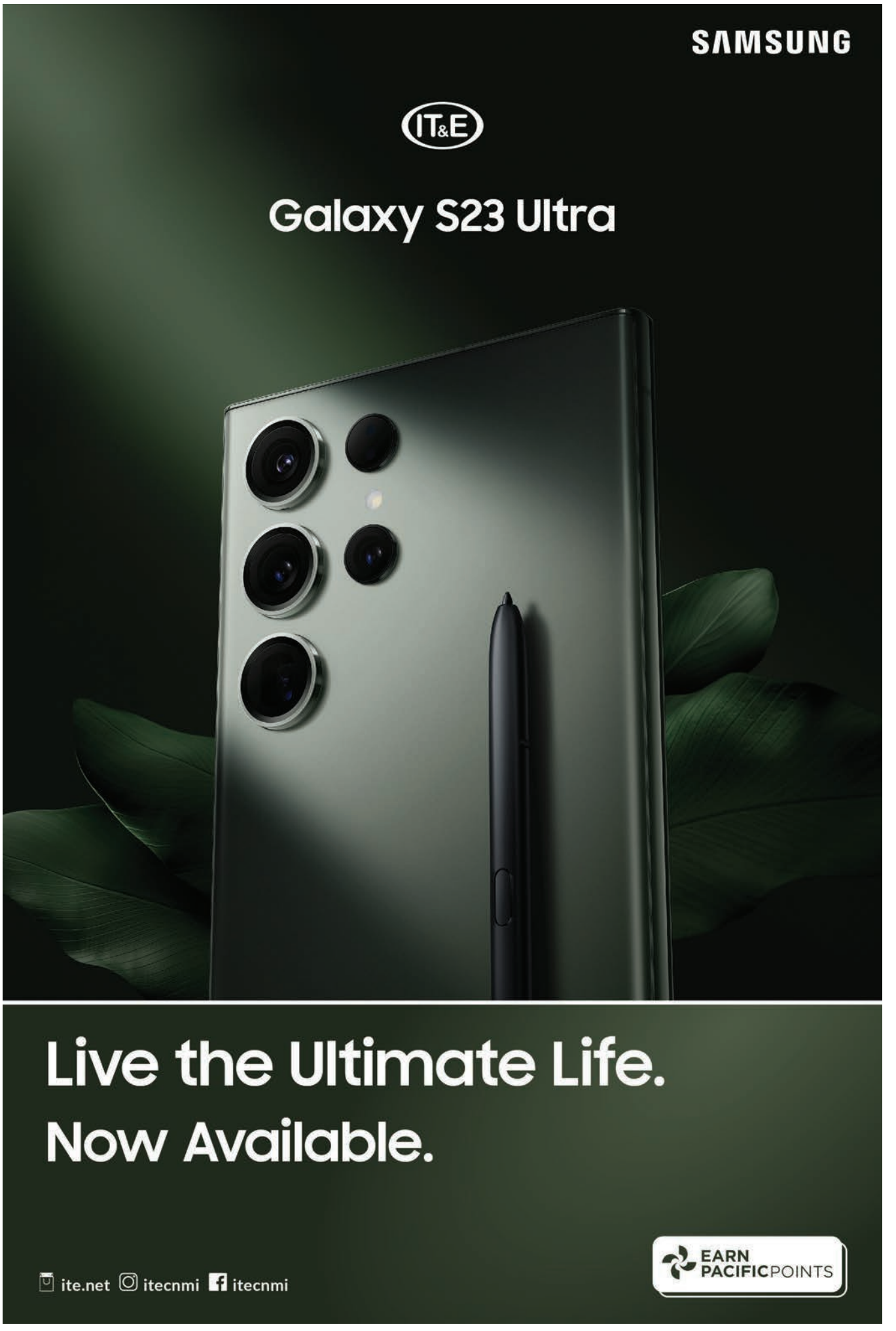
The charge against Sagana is punishable by up to a maximum sentence of 15 years imprisonment and a $250,000 fine.

Namaste Beautiful salon is now a 'ProaPerks partner'

Namaste Beautiful Salon and Spa is the latest company to sign on as a Northern Marianas College ProaPerks Partner, joining many other businesses and organizations. All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now receive a 10% discount on all individual services.

The spa, located at the USL Building on Middle Road in Gualo Rai, can be reached by calling (670) 233-9642."

Namaste Beautiful Salon and Spa joins the growing list of ProaPerks partners. Companies and other interested organizations who would like to become part of the ProaPerks program and take advantage of the buying power of thousands of individuals that include Northern Marianas College alumni, students, and employees, can find more information by emailing proaperks@marianas.edu. ***(PR)***



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The Power Team displays feats of strength

LEIGH GASES
From left, The Power Team's Matt Reed, Crissy Dopson, and Todd Keene pose with Saipan Community Church pastor Steve Dame after the first night of The Power Team performance on Wednesday night at the American Memorial Park amphitheater.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Three athletes from The Power Team—president Todd Keene, Matt Reed, and Crissy Dopson—gave a powerful performance of strength and speed, as well as shared the gospel during their first night of performances at the American Memorial Park amphitheater on Thursday night.

The free performances will continue to be held from 7pm to 8pm until Saturday, Feb. 25, and on Sunday, Feb. 26, it will be held from 3pm to 4pm.

The crowd of over 100 gathered at the amphitheater's outdoor seating on a clear evening for a family night—along with their dogs, to witness a spectacle that held them enthralled for an hour.

With the stage set ablaze at one point, Keene, Reed and Dopson showcased their strength by breaking layers of bricks with their bare arms, bent and twisted steel rods, broke baseball bats, broke out of police-grade handcuffs, tore thick books in half, and much more. Throughout the show, they spoke about the Christian gospel and also shared inspirational stories about their lives.

Toward the end of the performance, the crowd were called to gather at the front of the stage and were led in a prayer by Saipan Community Church pastor Steve Dame—as light evening showers blessed the gathering.

Dame said the turnout on the first night was great. During the day, Dame said that the team also went out and performed in schools and will be going to about 20 schools.

"We had an awesome day in the schools. I thought the students received The Power Team and their positive message well. Of course, they don't preach in the schools—they just share a very positive message about not bullying, not doing drugs or alcohol, and making good wise choices with their life," Dame added.

He added that the team did a tremendous job and he knows that every night, the performances will just get better and better.

"I would love for the community to come out and just experience it. Just to see these men of strength. …There's so much turmoil within the government and everything that's going on… the lack of tourism—we kind of lack hope. And that's what this week is about: It's about bringing hope again to the islands."

Keene, a 6'6" former National Football League player who towered over this reporter, said the first night of their performance was great.

"I thought it was a really good turnout for the first night. Usually, it takes a while to get the word out. But, we're [performing] in the schools during the daytime. The schools are not a Christian message; it's about good values, working hard, staying in school, anti-drugs, motivation, graduating, and anti-bullying. But then at night, if they want to come out, we get to share a little bit more of our faith, and what motivates us to want to do those things."

Keene said that Saipan was the furthest place they've performed so far. The team was also joined by Keene's wife, Courtney Keene, who greeted the crowd at the beginning of the show.

According to a press release from the group, The Power Team has performed, inspired, and motivated audiences in every state and in over 40 countries for over 30 years.

For more information, contact Dame via email at pastorsteve@saipancommunityschool.com or call (670) 484-7742.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY(CPA)
CNMI GOVERNMENT

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 • Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) is inviting qualified contractors to submit bid proposals and their qualifications for the PORT OF SAIPAN BERTH 103 REPAIRS, Project No. CPA-SS-001-17, for the island of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Bidders are to submit one original and two copies of their bid which shall be sealed in an envelope and marked on the cover package outside as follows: *"PORT OF SAIPAN BERTH 103 REPAIRS, CPA-SS-001-17"* and submitted no later than **2:00 P.M. (CHST), THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2023**, to the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd floor of the Arrival Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, at which time and place the sealed proposals will be publicly opened and read. Bidders are requested to minimize their company's attendees to ensure social distancing.

The Project, in general, consists of Berth 103 Cavity Repairs including all associated work, all in accordance with the Plans and Specifications.

The Project is being financed by the Commonwealth Ports Authority. The contract award, if it is to be made, will be made within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from the receipt of bids. CPA reserves the right to hold such bids in effect for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the date of bid opening.

A DVD containing the Contract Documents including plans, specifications and the bid schedule, may be obtained at the CPA Accounting Office, 2nd floor of the Departure Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, upon the payment of **TWO HUNDRED U.S. DOLLARS ($200.00)** for each set of plans and documents in electronic form (DVD). The payment is nonrefundable unless this notice to bidders is cancelled. Payment shall be made in cash, credit card, cashier's check or U.S. postal money order, made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Bidders should notify CPA's point of contact mentioned below immediately if there are issues retrieving the files on the DVD and are to verify all information using the specification table of contents and the index of drawings.

A pre-bid conference will be held at CPA's Capt. George Fleming Memorial Building Conference Room at the Port of Saipan, located in Lower Base on the island of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), at **10:00 A.M. (CHST), FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 2023**, to explain and clarify any questions regarding this project. Attendance is not mandatory. A site visit will follow the pre-bid conference. Bidders are requested to minimize their company's attendees to ensure social distancing.

Questions should be submitted in writing to the CPA Executive Director's Office, 2nd floor of the Arrival Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or emailed to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, Executive Assistant/Project Manager at wprater@cnmiports.com at least ten (10) days prior to the bid opening date; with the exception of extension requests which have no deadline. Responses to all questions and requests for information will be provided to all bidders who purchased a DVD and attended the pre-bid conference.

Bidders shall use the bid schedule form furnished by the Commonwealth Ports Authority on the DVD. Each bidder must also supply all supplemental information required in the specifications.

The contract period for construction of the project in its entirety shall be **FOUR HUNDRED TWENTY (420) calendar days**. Liquidated damages in the amount of **FIVE HUNDRED U.S. DOLLARS PER CALENDAR DAY ($500.00)** shall be assessed the Contractor for each calendar day that the completion of the Project is delayed beyond the contract completion date without approved excuse.

The apparent low bidder will be subject to a thorough and comprehensive review of its qualifications and Bid Documents to ensure that they are "responsive and responsible." This review will include, but is not necessarily limited to previous project experience, financial capabilities, quality of equipment and personnel, and bonding and insurance. If the apparent low bidder is found not to be "responsive or responsible", their bid will be rejected and the next lowest bidder will be evaluated for qualifications.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Notice to Bidders; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; (c) any calculation error made in the bid schedule or mis-enter of the quantity of line item; or (d) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

Each bid shall be accompanied by either a bid bond by a U.S. Treasury listed or CPA approved surety company, a certified check, or a cashier's check in the amount not less than ten percent (10%) of the bid price. Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

All mechanics and laborers for this procurement project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate established by the CNMI or the U.S. Secretary of Labor, whichever is higher. A copy of the Department of the Federal Labor Wage Rate Determination is included in Section GP 70-26 of the specifications. The bidder shall take into account minimum wage increases that may be imposed in the CNMI over the life of the Contract and include associated costs in the bid proposal. The EEO requirements, labor provisions, and wage rates are included in the specifications.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 USC §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders or offerors that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

By submitting a bid/proposal under this solicitation, the bidder or offeror certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred or suspended by any Federal department or agency from participation in this transaction.

In addition to the above, all bidders shall comply with all local and Federal requirements under this procurement.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY:

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: February 8, 2023

Cookies 'n Team this Saturday

The Girl Scouts of the Northern Mariana Islands will be hosting an NMI Girl Scout Cookie Booth this Saturday on Capital Hill, and is inviting the public to come out and support this team of young girls.

The cookie sale will be open from 11am until 2pm, and will be located at the CNMI's Women's Association on Capital Hill, building 1223, situated directly across the Medicaid Office.

As a non-profit organization, the Girl Scouts of the Northern Marianas Islands focuses on seeking to encourage and help raise NMI girls to become strong **g**o-getters, **i**nnovators, and **r**isk-taking **l**eaders. They are inviting the community to also show their love and support for these girls. ***(Chrystal Marino)***

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BICYCLES & SCOOTERS

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FRIDAY - SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24 - 25, 2023

US CHICKEN THIGH QUARTERS 22 LBS

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PALM BBQ CORNED BEEF 11.5oz

$4.99 ea.

DIAMOND G CALROSE RICE 50 LBS

$49.99

KIKKOMAN SOY SAUCE 1.8 LTR

$5 ea.

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$1.49 ea.

PURISS WATER 20/350ml

$5/cs.

HAWAIIAN SUN DRINKS 12pk

$9.99

JOETEN BUTANE GAS 4pk

$25.99/cs.

GROCERY/MARKET ITEMS

U.S. EGGS X-LARGE WH 1DZ

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U.S. GRAPES RED SEEDLESS /LB

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CHABAA 100% COCONUT WATER 1LT

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JELLO PUDDING LEMON C&S 4.3oz

$1.79 ea.

LYSOL DSNFECT SPRAY C LINEN 12oz
LYSOL DSNFECT FRESH SCENT 12z

$7.99 ea.

ARIZONA GREEN TEA 23oz

$1.35 ea.

MULAYS BRATWURST LINK 12z
MULAYS ITALIAN SAUSAGE MILD 12z
MULAYS ITALIAN SAUSAGE HOT 12z

$8.49 ea.

LAMB RACK FRENCHED /LBS

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$13.75/lb.

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Proposed rules on mediation of divorce, other issues withdrawn

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CNMI Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro has withdrawn a proposed Northern Mariana Islands Rules of Family Dispute Mediation that he recently submitted to the CNMI Legislature for approval.

Castro

Castro informed Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) and House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) that the concerns they received warrant additional review of the proposed rules.

After submitting the proposed rules to the Legislature last Jan. 24, Castro said they received comments from the House of Representatives Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee, through counsel John Bradley, concerning the confidentiality and the admissibility of evidence in certain proceedings.

"The court intends to submit a revised version at a later time," Castro said.

The proposed rules provide the procedures governing mediation of family law cases.

In his request for approval last Jan. 24, Castro said the proposal aims to facilitate mediation of cases involving divorce, custody, and other family law issues. He said mediation provides parties with a simplified procedure for resolving disputes and a greater opportunity to participate directly in resolution.

Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio chaired the committee that drafted the proposed rules and submitted it with the support of Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja.

Castro said members of the CNMI Bar Association had the opportunity to comment and propose recommendations to these rules before being finalized by the CNMI Supreme Court.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., in partnership with TurnKey Solutions, LLC and Dr. Haley Cash of the Pacific Islands Health Officers Association, conducted the NCD Hybrid Survey Training to certify 24 survey enumerators in household surveys and anthropometry measurements.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CHCC trains 24 survey enumerators for health survey

In preparation for the 2023 CNMI Non-Communicable Diseases and Risk Factor Hybrid Survey, 24 individuals completed the NCD Hybrid Survey Training on Feb. 10, 2023.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., in partnership with TurnKey Solutions, LLC and Dr. Haley Cash of the Pacific Islands Health Officers Association, conducted a five-day workshop to train survey enumerators to effectively conduct NCD household surveys, which included personable interview skills and the measurement of height and weight, from Patricia Coleman, interim dean of the Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service at the Northern Marianas College, body mass index, random/non-fasting blood glucose, and blood pressure.

The goal of the 2023 CNMI Non-Communicable Diseases and Risk Factor Hybrid Survey is to assess the current prevalence of non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease, and cancer, in the CNMI. The survey also collects information on behavioral risk factors, such as tobacco and alcohol use, dietary habits, physical activity, oral health, and cancer screening, that also contributes to the prevalence of NCDs in the CNMI.

The last survey conducted in 2016 produced valuable population-based information that is utilized by the CHCC and partners to inform decision making and design or improve programs and services that address the health priorities and needs of the CNMI population. Since 2016, the CHCC has implemented free cancer screenings offered by the CARES program at the CHCC Oncology Center, free Diabetes Self- Management and Education classes, and mobile clinic services for access to preventive screenings and primary care.

"Many thanks to many individuals at CHCC, PIHOA, and in the community to help us kick off this survey that will help describe the current state of the health of our CNMI residents," said CEO Esther Muña.

"This survey is timely as the nation anticipates the end of the public health emergency for COVID-19 and it will help us have a comprehensive post-COVID view of the health of our community that can be used by our leaders and policy makers," she added. "We humbly ask residents to help us with the completion of this survey so together we can build a healthier community".

Our survey enumerators will be going house-to-house from Feb. 13 to the end of April 2023.

CHCC is seeking your participation and a little of your time when the surveyors knock on your doors. Your participation will help us in our efforts to improve the health of the CNMI community!

For more information, call the Non-Communicable Disease Programs at (670) 236-8711 or check out our website at www.chcc.health. ***(CHCC)***

CNMI DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

PUBLIC NOTICE

The CNMI Department of Commerce, Central Statistics Division is preparing to conduct the CNMI 2023 Prevailing Wage Study (PWS) survey to begin on March 01, 2023 and notifies all businesses and employers in the CNMI to log on to the CSD Data Collection Portal and complete the PWS survey questionnaire.

All businesses and employers (Private & Public), with and with no employees, are urged to complete this survey before March 15, 2023.

Data Collection Portal Link:
http://cnmidata.commerce.gov.mp/dev1/

ROBERT T. TORRES
ATTORNEY AT LAW
5960 Plata Drive
P.O. Box 500730 CK, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 234-7859 | Fax: (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Petitioner Bernadita "Bennet" T. Seman

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF	Civil Action No. 91-0918 P
FELIPE MCGUINNESS SEMAN, Aka FELIPE IGIBOR SEMAN,	NOTICE OF HEARING
Deceased.	DATE: March 2, 2023 TIME: 10:00 A.M. JUDGE: JOSEPH N. CAMACHO

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE FELIPE MCGUINNESS SEMAN aka FELIPE IGIBOR SEMAN OR HIS ESTATE:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that **BERNADITA "BENNET" T. SEMAN** has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue a Verified Petition to Proceed with Probate Proceedings toward Distribution and Appointment of Administratrix for the Estate of Felipe Mcguninnes Seman aka Felipe Igibor Seman, the decedent. The proposed Administratrix is Bernadita "Bennet" T. Seman. The Attorney for the Petitioner is Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, whose address is 5960 Plata Drive P.O. Box 500730, Saipan MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition is scheduled to be heard on the date and at the time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing. Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the deceased or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days of this publication or the claim(s) will be baited. A copy of your claim should also be sent to the attorney for Petitioner, **ROBERT T. TORRES, Attorney at Law**, at the address above indicated.

Dated this 3rd day of February 2023

/s/
Clerk of Court/ Deputy Clerk of Court

ROBERT T. TORRES
ATTORNEY AT LAW
5960 Plata Drive
P.O. Box 500730 CK, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 234-7859 | Fax: (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Petitioner Bernadita T. Seman

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF	CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0016
CATALINA T. SEMAN,	NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent.	DATE: March 2, 2023 TIME: 10:00 A.M. JUDGE: Honorable Joseph N. Camacho

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE CATALINA T. SEMAN OR HER ESTATE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that **BERNADITA T. SEMAN** has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue a Verified Petition to Admit Estate into Probate and Appointment of Administratrix for the Estate of Catalina T. Seman the decedent. The proposed Administratrix is Bernadita T. Seman. The Attorney for the Petitioner is Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, whose address is 5960 Plata Drive P.O. Box 500730, Saipan MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition is scheduled to be heard on the date and at the time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing. Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the deceased or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days of this publication or the claim(s) will be baited. A copy of your claim should also be sent to the attorney for Petitioner, **ROBERT T. TORRES, Attorney at Law**, at the address above indicated.

Dated this 3rd day of February, 2023.

/s/
Clerk of Court/ Deputy Clerk of Court

ANTONIO SN. BORJA, Chairman · JAMES M. MENDIOLA, Vice-Chairman · HENRY H. SAN NICOLAS, Member · CHARLENE M. LIZAMA, Executive Director

TINIAN CASINO GAMING CONTROL COMMISSION
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission (TCGCC) hereby gives notice that it will hold its Regular Meeting on Monday, February 27, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the TCGCC Conference Room.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY
- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Adoption of Agenda
- d. Adoption of Minutes
  1. October 18, 2022 - Regular Meeting
  2. December 8, 2022 – Special Meeting
  3. January 11, 2023 - Special Meeting

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS[1]

III. REPORTS
- a. Chair's Report
- b. Executive Director's Report

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- a. Casino License
  1) Status Update of Bridge Investment Group/Tinian Diamond Casino
- b. Professional Services Proposal – Asian Business Knowledge

V. NEW BUSINESS
- a. Proposed Contract – Legal Counsel
- b. Key Employee Personal History Disclosure
- c. Consulting Agreement – Amerine Gaming Enterprises

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION[2]

VII. OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

[1] *Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to 3 minutes. Everyone is welcome to submit written comments.*
[2] *Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Commission may vote to meet in executive session at any time.*

Free safety course on excavations, trenches given by UCSD in a classroom environment

The University of California, San Diego is partnering with the CNMI in providing a free safety course on excavations and trenches.

The four-hour course, which will be held in a classroom-style setting , will take place on March 6-10, 2023, is designed to equip construction workers, contractors, and safety officers with the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure a safe working environment in excavation and trenching operations. Those interested in participating need to choose only one of which day to attend.

The training on March 6 will take place on Saipan, from 12:30pm to 4:30pm, at the American Memorial Park Theater.

There will be two trainings on March 7 on Saipan. The first will take place from 8am to 12pm, at the American Memorial Park Theater. The second training will take place from 12:30pm to 4:30pm, also at the American Memorial Park Theater.

There will also be two trainings on March 8 on Saipan. The first will be from 8am to 12pm, at the American Memorial Park Theater. The second training will be from12:30pm to 4:30pm, also at the American Memorial Park Theater.

The March 9 training will be on Tinian, from 9am to 1pm at the Tinian Public Library.

The final training on March 10 will be on Rota, from 9am to 1pm, at the Northern Marianas College Rota campus.

Excavation and trenching are among the most hazardous construction activities, and workers who are not properly trained are at high risk of accidents and fatalities. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, excavation and trenching accidents have resulted in numerous injuries and fatalities. To prevent such accidents, UCSD and CNMI have teamed up to provide this free safety course in a classroom environment.

The course will cover topics such as soil classification, protective systems, and safe work practices. Participants will also learn about the relevant OSHA regulations and how to comply with them. The course will be taught by experienced instructors who have extensive knowledge of excavation and trenching safety.

The course is open to anyone who is involved in excavation and trenching operations in the CNMI. The course will take place at a convenient location in the CNMI and will be conducted in a classroom environment. Participants who successfully complete the course will receive a certificate of completion.

"We are thrilled to partner with CNMI in providing this important safety training," said Dr. Mary Walshok, UCSD's vice chancellor for Public Programs. "Our goal is to equip workers and employers with the knowledge and skills they need to prevent accidents and ensure a safe working environment."

To register for the free safety course on excavations and trenches, contact the CNMI OSHA Consultation Office at (670) 664-3155 or email at jignacio@dol.gov.mp by stating the employee name, company name, and date of course. There are only 30 seats available each day. ***(PR/Saipan Tribune)***

Rip currents until this afternoon

The public is being warned that there is a high risk of rip currents through Friday afternoon.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam, dangerous rip currents are present in east-facing reefs of the Marianas. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water. ***(PR)***

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...Service beyond the sale...

DISPOSAL OF UNCLAIMED UNITS

ATTENTION!!!

SAIPAN COMPUTER SERVICES SHALL BE DISPOSING OFF ALL CUSTOMER COMPUTER AND PERIPHERAL UNITS (REPAIRABLE OR IRREPARABLE) THAT HAVE BEEN UNCLAIMED FOR SIX (6) MONTHS OR MORE. DISPOSAL SHALL BEGIN AFTER APRIL 30, 2023. PLEASE CLAIM YOUR UNITS IMMEDIATELY.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

With his own two eyes: Biden makes an important trip to Kyiv

A year ago, Russian President Vladimir Putin thought he would be riding triumphantly into Kyiv, perhaps aboard a tank from the vanguard of his armed forces that were supposed to steamroll Ukrainian defenders within days.

Instead, that tank is probably now lying in a rusted husk somewhere, and the foreign leader striding triumphantly in the Ukrainian capital is Joe Biden, who took a train into Kyiv to stand with wartime President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and pledge continued U.S. support for Ukraine's self-defense.

Biden's surprise visit (of which the Russians were told in advance to avoid any bombardment) bolsters the Western commitment to Ukraine and to keep military assistance flowing. His decision to travel to an active war zone—so active that his visit with Zelenskyy to St. Michael's Cathedral was interrupted by an air raid siren—in order to personally join the battle-weary public sends a couple of important messages: despite some news fatigue, international support for Ukraine is not waning, and the United States is not bowed by Russia's aggression. It was not an easy message to deliver, requiring months of careful planning, coordination and uncertainty, but it was a necessary one.

As powerful as symbolic gestures are, they are also merely a tool that's useless without an overarching strategy and clear objectives, and at this stage the predominant goal should be to reach a negotiated end to the war that leaves Ukraine as intact as possible. Ukrainian resistance has been nothing short of astonishing, but it seems unlikely it can win a total war and push Russia completely out of its territory, and certainly without seeing large portions of the country destroyed completely.

International logistical and weapons support is appropriate in that it puts Ukraine on much stronger footing to set terms of the deal, including an absolute maxim that no territory will be given up. Forcing Russia to the negotiating table in a way that won't seek to back the nuclear-armed Putin into a corner should be the next step to avoid another year of bloodshed.

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MIKE SMITH
LAS VEGAS SUN 2023
HE'S OLD AND TIRED.
HE JUST TOOK A SECRET TRIP ALL THE WAY TO UKRAINE. I CAN'T EVEN GET YOU TO TAKE OUT THE TRASH.
PRESIDENT BIDEN

The first year of war in Ukraine has defied predictions

By DANIEL DEPETRIS
Chicago Tribune

Daniel DePetris is a fellow at Defense Priorities and a foreign affairs columnist for the Chicago Tribune.

If you told me a year ago that the Russian army would be performing as incompetently in Ukraine as it is today, I would have responded with a sarcastic chuckle. And yet, 12 months into Europe's bloodiest conflict since World War II, this is precisely what has occurred. The Ukrainians have made mincemeat of the Russians, evident in last year's successful counteroffensives south of Kharkiv and in Kherson. The United Kingdom Defense Ministry estimates that as many as 60,000 Russian troops have been killed, more than four times what the Soviet Army lost during its decadeslong misadventure in Afghanistan.

The war in Ukraine, which reaches its one-year mark today, has surprised in more ways than one. Two in particular stand out.

First and foremost, we've learned that Russian President Vladimir Putin isn't some superhuman with unbounded leadership qualities or an unlimited capacity to throw his opponents off-kilter. This has become blazingly clear over the past 12 months, but it wasn't always so obvious. Before he plunged Russia into a war of choice, Putin was as much vilified in the West as he was envied for his ability to keep rivals in check, exploit situations as they come and enhance Russia's power. Longtime Russia experts in Washington warned U.S. policymakers not to underestimate Putin's craftiness, while senior lawmakers at the time talked him up as a man who was "running circles" around the United States with the niftiness and patience of the judo master Putin claims to be.

This narrative, however, has totally fallen apart over the last year. Putin isn't some grand chess master without fault, but rather a mortal who isn't immune from exhibiting poor judgment and making terrible decisions. In the lead-up to the war, for instance, Putin failed to question his strong biases about the stiffness of Ukrainian resolve, grossly underestimated the fighting capacity of the enemy and grossly overestimated what the Russian military could accomplish.

Whether due to his isolation, stubbornness or delusions of grandeur, Putin has placed the country he loves so much into an extremely difficult position. The Russian army is heavily strained, with undisciplined, demoralized, inexperienced troops being used as cannon fodder to crawl a few yards ahead—if they advance at all. The Russian economy, powered by gas and oil sales, is increasingly cut off from Europe, its main cash cow since the Soviet days. Perhaps as many as 1 million Russians have fled the country, either in principled opposition to the war or to escape fighting in it. Some of Russia's most highly educated, who would ordinarily become productive members of Russian society, no longer see a reason to stay.

To be fair, Russia still has time to turn the war around. The Russian army still has a lot of men in reserve, is churning out munitions 24 hours a day, and possesses an air force even U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin admits is largely intact. The Ukrainians are putting out a very high rate of artillery fire on a daily basis, and their supporters in the West publicly acknowledge that replacing those munitions is a heavy lift.

But the idea of "Putin the grand strategist" is now fundamentally over.

The other surprise, albeit more to Russia's advantage, is how the international community as a whole has responded to the war. At the outset, there was a strong assumption that Russia would not only be castigated for its aggression but also turned into a pariah. To some extent, this has happened—at least in the West.

The Europe-Russia trade relationship is dwindling, most notably on energy: The European Union's imports of Russian natural gas have declined from more than 40% before the war to near single digits today. The Russians are under the strongest sanctions regime in modern history, with nations that have large economies such as the U.S., those in the EU, Australia, Japan and South Korea all participating. Diplomatically, Russia was suspended from the United Nations Human Rights Council last April, and Russian airlines can't even fly over European airspace anymore.

Yet the West doesn't make up the entire planet. The adage, "Where you stand depends on where you sit," is very much in operation. Developing, middle-tier and rising powers in the Global South want to keep themselves at arm's length from the war and don't want to choose sides one way or the other. This is less a reflection of Putin's international support than it is a desire to maintain productive relationships with as many major powers as possible. Business as usual is still the name of the game.

Latin American governments have opposed U.S. entreaties to donate their Russian-made military equipment to Ukraine in exchange for more advanced U.S. defense platforms. The region is more interested in an immediate cease-fire, however unrealistic that is, than following the U.S. playbook. The same goes for much of the African continent; South Africa, to name one, began joint military exercises off its coast with the Russian navy last week.

The war's first year has defied predictions. We will soon find out whether the second year will be as dizzying for the prognosticators.

Call from the Governor's Office: Part 2

MY GLASS CUP

By JIM RAYPHAND
Special to the Saipan Tribune

James M. Rayphand is the director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and is a former executive director of the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc.

I attended the governor's Cabinet meeting last Friday afternoon, leaving me both humbled and invigorated about the general task at hand. "If ever there was a time for it, *now* is the time for you to start working for your community and with each other," the governor told all of us. "Do whatever you can to help each other. We cannot afford to work in silos anymore." I had never attended a Cabinet meeting before, so I walked in with no frame of reference as to what I should expect and I walked away with this very clear and poignant message that truthfully was music to my ears—I walked away inspired, if you will. Given the awesome responsibility entrusted upon each of us, it is nice to know that there is a core group of people we can lean on as needed.

Later that evening I would spend part of my "happy hour" trying to convince my brothers and a few of our closest friends that I am an "important" person now (because I get to sit in on the governor's Cabinet meetings) and that they should start being nicer to me. My oldest brother responded first with a drawn out, "Shuuud up and get me a beer!" Someone else chimed in with, "Yeah. Get us all one! Hurry up!" Apparently (and rightfully so) they aren't impressed with my newfound title and already know what all of us should know—that titles (in and of themselves) do not determine the importance of a person regardless of how hard one may try to flaunt it. What matters most is how a person conducts himself, what he does with the inherent authority of his respective office and whether or not he accomplishes the respective mission of said office. Most of us know far too well the disaster that comes with a big head (or ego) and a title. Far too often we see people get into positions of authority where they can't see past themselves and completely lose sight of why they have a title in the first place.

Coincidentally, the governor echoed this same sentiment at aforementioned meeting. "Titles are not what we're about. Your titles don't mean anything unless you're doing good for your community and for the people who work with you," he said. "Every individual should be treated with respect." I couldn't have agreed more.

As for the task at the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, we have an existing State Plan that lays out a roadmap to achieve OVR's mission, which is to increase employment and promote independence for eligible individuals with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. As part of that plan OVR, in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council, has established priorities and goals aligned with requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act otherwise known as WIOA. More specifically, the priorities and goals are outlined as follows:

Priority 1: Transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services (PreETS) - Implement pre-employment transition services through the realignment of staff and service delivery methods; and expand/improve the CNMI's service delivery infrastructure and the program's capacity for making available PreETS to students with disabilities in need of such services.

Priority 2: Business/Employer Engagement - Increase partnerships with local businesses to develop or expand work experiences through on-the-job and work experience training, internship/ apprenticeship, and employment opportunities for qualified adults and youth with disabilities; and develop systems capacity, knowledge and skills to effectively meet the needs of businesses/ employers.

Priority 3: Competitive Integrated Employment - Increase competitive integrated employment opportunities, supports and outcomes for adults and youth with disabilities, particularly those with the most significant disabilities.

Priority 4: Agency Performance - Improve overall Agency performance

"Under WIOA, the governor of each state must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the state's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of federal, state, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy."

As with our government in general, the implementation of the Unified State Plan requires the collective effort of various groups, agencies and other community partners which gets back to my first Cabinet meeting.

I still can't reconcile how or why my name got pulled from what I suspect was a large pool of highly-capable and well-qualified people to join in this new administration's mission, but the truth is that I really don't need to know. All that I and the rest of us who were called upon to help should be concerned with are what our jobs entail and what we need to do in order to accomplish our respective missions in the best way possible.

As for being an important person now—NO!—I do not for one second think so highly of myself nor do I have enough hubris in me to ever believe such a thing. That is a running joke among many of those closest to me. However, while I personally may not be, the work that we are asked to do and the respective offices we are entrusted to hold are very important—important for the people we serve, important for the people we work with and most of all important for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. I, for one, am all in. Let's do this!

The war on 'woke' is meaningless, which is why it's so popular

By SOLOMON D. STEVENS
InsideSources.com

Solomon D. Stevens is the author of Religion, Politics, and the Law *(co-authored with Peter Schotten) and* Challenges to Peace in the Middle East. *He wrote this for InsideSources.com.*

Right-wing politicians are on the warpath. They want to banish everything that is, as they call it, "woke."

The Florida legislature passed the Stop W.O.K.E. bill, which is currently before the courts. Social media is rife with posts decrying the evils of, as Elon Musk calls it, the "woke mind," and Sarah Huckabee Sanders accuses President Joe Biden of being led by a "woke mob." People around the country want "woke" teachers jailed. The only problem is that the word itself has very little meaning. And that is what makes the word dangerous.

What do people think they mean when they use the word "woke"? A lot of different things. Some see it as a reference to the excesses of political correctness. Others believe the word applies to anything that makes them feel guilty for being white. Some see the word as a sign of gender confusion. And others somehow see "woke" as referring to socialism, communism or even fascism. This would be funny if it weren't so serious.

Almost everyone has heard of George Orwell's "1984," but he also wrote an essay that is less well-known but extremely important: "Politics and the English Language." In it, he discusses problems he sees with how we use language and how it is connected to our political life. We could use his help today.

Orwell points out that when we use sloppy, imprecise language, our thinking becomes sloppy and imprecise. In that respect, he says, our words can be both a cause and an effect. Our language "becomes ugly and inaccurate because our thoughts are foolish, but the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts." And that is the problem with using the word "woke."

People who don't know what they are talking about use an ugly and inaccurate word to express themselves, but using that word makes it more likely that our thoughts will become uglier and more foolish.

The word "woke" has no clear meaning, but to those who use it to condemn others, that doesn't matter because the word is just a way of announcing one's membership in a kind of club or gang.

It is a culture war badge.

Those who use it simply say they are unhappy with how things are today and would like the world to change in ways they would like to see. And they seek others who share their general, inarticulate uneasiness. That is why, as Orwell put it, "words of this kind are often used in a consciously dishonest way."

In addition, the language of "woke" is employed to vilify others; "they" are not simply wrong, they are enemies of civilization. Those who are "woke" are portrayed as a threat to everything decent and good. But as Aristotle says at the beginning of his "Ethics," everyone wants what is good. The problem is that people disagree about what that is.

Our country could benefit from a genuine argument about cultural issues. But using "woke" as a catch-all term for bad things is not helpful. In fact, it contributes to political confusion and conflict.

Orwell would caution us that deliberate imprecision in language cannot help us. We don't need vague, undefined words that serve only to demonize our opponents. It is hard for people to respond to the charge of being "woke" when the word makes almost no sense.

The current war on woke isn't an attempt to take a policy stand. It is more like a version of standing your ground. Those who use the word as a term of derision see themselves as defending civilization against the forces of darkness, but neither civilization nor darkness is defined. The cry to "stop woke" is nothing more than a cry to others who are confused to circle the wagons and prepare to defend whatever they happen to cherish against whatever they fear.

Our political life is not helped by the sloppy language we use, but Orwell is optimistic that politics can be improved by clarifying the language we use by eliminating what has become bad habits.

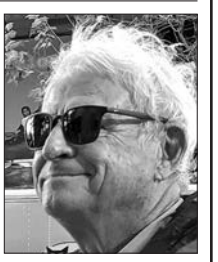
"If one gets rid of these habits, one can think more clearly, and to think clearly is a necessary first step toward political regeneration." We can take a step toward improving our political life by using language more precisely and meaningfully.

Go on! Look up!

LITERARY NOOK

BY BOB COLDEEN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Bob Coldeen, a retired journalist who was elected to the NMI Sports Hall of Fame last year, enjoys listening to music and being a grandfather.



A glass bubble breaks
and a dream bursts.

Emotional splinters sprinkle the island,
sharp-edged slivers, jagged,
falling over the white sands
and green hills of Saipan.

Stop, know the pounding pain
of shattered dreams, illusions ambushed,
slicing the Commonwealth, cruel,
leaving unseen scars on unnumbered hearts.

Go on!

Climb the fragile bubble, ride the dream
around the reef, over Tapochau
past dried blood and spent tears.
Soar to where the soul yearns.

Look up!

Rise high, fly high, cruise
on fresh bubbles spawned spontaneously
floating over the island
sparkling in the Saipan sky.

Fill dream bubbles with hopes and desires.
Walk past the splinters.
Ignore the delusions.
Follow the rhythm of heart strings.

Killing cavities in threes

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

The nationwide problem of cavity and tooth decay among children is not new to the CNMI. It is, in fact, quite common, resulting in many of our little ones in our lives great discomfort and pain. Sadly, all of these could've been preventable with a little care and attention. Being in the midst of the National Children's Dental Health Month, I reached out to several dental clinics around the island and solicited their thoughts on the observance of the month, and how we can help our kids have and maintain healthy teeth. I was able to narrow it down to what I'd like to call the "cavities and threes."

Three problems

When speaking to several dentists on island, many mentioned three common problems that can result in cavities, decay, and infection, especially among children. The first and most obvious is neglect when it comes to brushing and flossing. Often when speaking to these dentists, many express that they find it sad to see a child going through the unnecessary discomfort of tooth decay when things like the buildup of bacteria and plaque could've been prevented. One dentist said that a young child once came in with their whole set of teeth already decayed. She explained that for some children with an immense amount of decay, once the teeth are extracted, it would be hard for the child to chew properly as they wait for their adult set of teeth to grow.

A diet consisting of lots of sweets and acidic food/drinks can be a normal thing for many individuals, including myself, but this can also be a great push on the oral decline-coaster, with the chemicals in processed sweets and acidic foods contributing to not only the decline of oral but also overall physical health. Let me tell you, this doesn't just apply to children; I made sure to note that down for my future reference as well. Goodbye to my iced latte.

Lastly, the dentists I spoke with said that children are often afraid of dentists because of what they've been told and how dentists are used as a scare tactic at times for kids. They try to earn or win the affection of a child by giving out candies and toys. Dentist often recommend that parents get their children used to regular visits to a dentist so that way children are less likely to freak out and see that dentists are actually helping them

Three solutions

Much like the three problems, there are three ways that can set children on a road to better oral health.

As mentioned earlier, dentists would recommend that children see them at least twice a year for a regular checkup and they added that they can help with children as young

See CAVITIES on Next Page

ASK THE PEDIATRICIAN

How important is it to take care of baby teeth?

Dr. PATRICIA BRAUN
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

Seeing your baby's first tooth is an exciting milestone. Most little ones will get their first (primary) teeth around 6 months of age, though tiny teeth can emerge as early as 3 months.

Did you know cavities can develop as soon as your baby has teeth? Since baby teeth will eventually fall out, it might not seem that important to take good care of them. Surprisingly, your child's first teeth are essential to the health of their permanent teeth—and the foundation for lifelong health.

Cavities can form when the shiny surface of our teeth—the enamel—is harmed by common bacteria living in our mouths. The bacteria feed on sugary substances left behind from what we eat and drink. In the process, they create acids that attack tooth enamel, opening the door for tooth decay.

Even the natural sugars in breast milk and formula can kick-start the process of tooth decay. And even though primary teeth start falling out when kids are around 6 years old, what happens before then will influence your child's dental health over the long term. Research shows proper diet and dental hygiene habits during a child's infant and toddler years reduce the risk of tooth decay as they become older.

Even though we have made great strides in preventing tooth decay, it is the most common chronic health problem in children. In fact, 23% of all kids will get cavities before their fifth birthday. Consider:

- Decayed baby teeth may need to be taken out by the dentist, which can be painful and frightening for your child (and costly for your family)
- Missing baby teeth leave gaps, causing nearby teeth to shift around. This can keep your child's permanent teeth from coming in correctly, which might mean braces later
- Kids (and adults) need healthy teeth to speak clearly and chew their food thoroughly, the first step in healthy digestion. A bright, shining smile gives a child confi-

See HOW on Next Page

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new wave dental

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February is Children's Dental Health Awareness Month, and it's the perfect time to focus on your child's oral health.

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Let's work together to keep our children's smiles bright and healthy!

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Clinic Schedule: Tue – Sat from 8:30am – 5:30pm
Call (670) 233-3300 | OPEN SATURDAYS!

CAVITIES

From page 12

as infants, or as soon as the first tooth pops out. They also sympathize with the cost and added that, although sometimes just to have a regular dental visit may be costly for some without medical/dental insurance, and especially in these times of inflation, the good news is there have been many community outreaches (made by both private and public dental health organizations) that can help.

As for the diet, they suggest lessening sweets, or completely removing processed sweets from the diet and replacing it with natural sugars like fruits and other healthier snack choices like nuts cheese and lessen or even substitute sweet drinks with water and milk.

And of course, third and most importantly, the preventive maintenance: brushing and flossing teeth regularly. They suggest helping out children and seeing that their teeth are being cleaned on a regular basis to prevent tooth decay, cavities, and gum inflammation; and to also be a good example by keeping these habits ourselves.

With a large amount of dental healthcare options and outreaches in the CNMI, with a little attention and care we can provide our children with a healthier lifestyle and oral health.

HOW

From page 12

dence, too—an essential part of making friends, getting along in school and enjoying life

Here are steps recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for preventing cavities in babies and young children.

■ No bottles in bed. Putting your child to sleep with a bottle allows the sugars found in formula and breast milk to linger on teeth, setting the stage for tooth decay. (In fact, many doctors and dentists refer to early cavities as baby bottle tooth decay).

■ Handle pacifiers, spoons and cups with care. Tooth decay-causing bacteria can easily move from mouth to mouth. So, for example, you should avoid putting a pacifier in your mouth and then giving it to your child or tasting your baby's food before offering them a bite from the same spoon.

■ Cleanse little mouths after each meal. Even before your infant's first teeth breakthrough, it is important to get into a healthy routine. Wipe the gums with a clean, damp washcloth or gauze pad after each feeding. When baby teeth come in, switch to a soft-bristled toothbrush with a smear (about the size of a grain of rice) of fluoride toothpaste. Around your child's first birthday, create a healthy routine of brushing two times daily for two minutes each time. Consider setting up a bedtime routine of brushing your child's teeth after their last feed, reading them a book and then getting them to bed at a regular bedtime: brush, book, bed.

■ Studies suggest that breastfeeding during a child's first year can help reduce the risk of tooth decay by half. This may be because of other effects breast milk has the immune system or microbiome (the balance of good and bad bacteria). Still, whether you give your baby breast milk or formula, you should wipe their gums and any erupting teeth after feedings to minimize risk of decay.

■ Introduce a cup around your child's first birthday. Teaching young ones to drink from a cup can help prevent tooth decay. Plan to begin moving your child from the breast or bottle to a lidded cup around 12 months. Milk, breast milk and formula can be given at mealtimes, but fill your child's cup with plain water in between.

■ Avoid using cups or bottles to soothe your child. When little ones get fussy, it's tempting to offer them a little formula or milk, but this exposes little teeth to sugars for long periods. Use a regular pacifier to calm your child, but be sure not to dip it in honey or any other sweetener.

■ Skip the sugary drinks. Fruit juice, soda and sweetened drinks aren't good for your little one's teeth. In fact, the AAP does not recommend juice for babies under 12 months. After that, limit juices to four ounces per day and mix them with water (half-water, half-juice is best).

■ Limit sticky fruits and treats. Sticky foods that promote tooth decay include raisins and other dried fruits, gummy candies, taffy, fruit roll-ups and snack bars with honey or molasses. Try to limit these foods in your child's diet and have kids brush or rinse with plain water after eating them.

■ Make water the family drink of choice. Regular tap water, which usually contains fluoride to strengthen tooth enamel, is the healthiest drink for your child's teeth. Drinking plenty of water cleanses your child's mouth and helps maintain saliva flow, which also washes away decay-causing bacteria.

■ Learn more about fluoride. Decades of studies have shown that fluoride is a superhero in fighting tooth decay. Most kids get the fluoride they need from tap water and toothpaste that delivers fluoride. Your pediatrician or dentist may also apply a fluoride varnish to your child's teeth, a helpful step two to four times a year that can continue as your child grows.

When your baby's first tooth appears, it is time to schedule their first dental visit. This is the ideal time to learn more about dental care for kids and what you will need to do as they grow.

Over time, your dentist can help you set up a healthy family routine, explaining everything from how to teach little hands to brush and floss to fitting young athletes with the right mouthguard.

Since babies see the doctor several times before their first birthday, pediatricians should check inside little mouths. It can be difficult to spot warning signs in baby teeth, so your pediatrician's expert eye is especially helpful.

As your child grows, your pediatrician will offer tips and suggestions that support the expert care your family dentist will provide. They can also apply fluoride varnish to your child's teeth in partnership with your child's dentist. In addition, pediatricians can help parents learn more about special risks that make some children more cavity prone. For example, preemies often have weaker tooth enamel than babies born at full term. Certain health conditions and medicines can reduce saliva flow, making brushing and flossing even more important.

Kids learn from the adults around them. That is why parents and caregivers should take excellent care of their own teeth. As one dentist puts it: "Bad teeth don't necessarily run in the family, but bad dental habits do."

Set a positive example by letting little ones watch while you brush and floss. Explain that this is something we do twice a day, morning and night, even when we are away from home. Mark dental appointments on the family calendar, which shows kids that regular checkups are a priority. Some children benefit from going to the dentist more than every six months to help them avoid getting cavities or keep cavities that have already started from getting worse.

Encourage good habits by adding fun to your child's routine. Toddlers and preschoolers may enjoy brushing to music or marking their progress on a tooth care calendar. The American Dental Association offers free coloring and craft sheets you can download and share, too.

Healthy baby teeth set the stage for a lifetime of good dental health. Teeth play a crucial role in helping us speak clearly, smile confidently and chew our food thoroughly, which nourishes our bodies for overall good health.

Setting a good example helps prevent tooth decay now and in the future.

Along with your family dentist, your pediatrician plays a key role in caring for your child's mouth and teeth.

Colgate
Teaching your child about healthy eating habits is one of the best practices for a lifetime of good health.
Here are some helpful tips:
Eat fruits and vegetables for snacks rather than candies and cookies.
Brush your child's teeth twice daily.
Serve water at mealtime rather than juice or soda.
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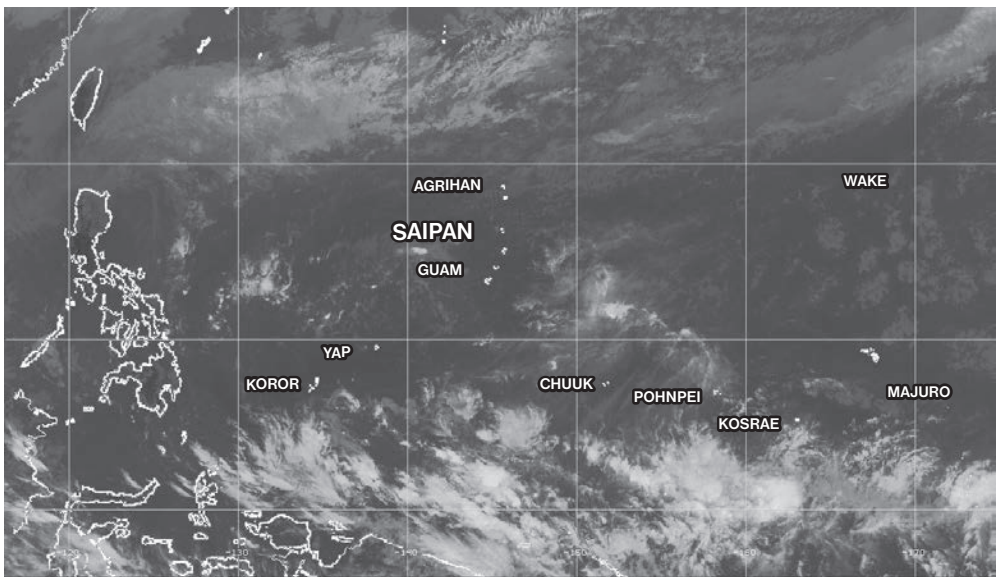
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
86º 76º	86º 76º	86º 76º	84º 74º	85º 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 11:48 AM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Marianas: Satellite, radar and the 00Z sounding all indicate a drier pattern has nosed into the Marianas. Expect isolated showers the rest of today. Eastern Micronesia: Majuro has reported minor coastal inundation the last few days during times of high tide. This threat may persist a few more tide cycles due to the new moon tides. A Coastal Flood Advisory has been issued for Kosrae and Majuro through noontime Friday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Scattered Thunderstorms/Wind	86° / 77°
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	83° / 76°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 80°
Majuro	Scattered Thunderstorms	82° / 79°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Saturday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Sunday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Monday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Tuesday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	9:27 AM	10:13 PM	-
Saturday	10:07 AM	11:07 PM	-
Sunday	10:49 AM	-	-
Monday	-	12:02 AM	11:34 AM
Tuesday	-	12:57 AM	12:21 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Rain	64° / 56°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	48° / 23°
Hong Kong	Sunny	75° / 58°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	80° / 71°
London	Cloudy	50° / 36°
Los Angeles	Showers	53° / 44°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 76°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	90° / 75°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	81° / 73°
New York	Cloudy	49° / 43°
Osaka	Rain	47° / 39°
Paris	Cloudy	52° / 37°
Busan	Cloudy	57° / 34°
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	64° / 53°
Salem	Cloudy	80° / 66°
San Francisco	Rain	49° / 40°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	48° / 23°
Tokyo	Showers	54° / 45°
Washington, DC	Cloudy	80° / 54°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
4:32 AM	Low Tide	0.21
10:36 AM	High Tide	1.84
5:17 PM	Low Tide	0.26
11:09 PM	High Tide	1.57

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
TW9308	3:50AM	7:20AM	1, 4, 5, 7
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	9:20PM	2:50AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 13, 2023

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:20 A.M.	11:38 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3:40 P.M.	3:58 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
9:40 A.M.	9:58 A.M.	6,7

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:00 P.M.	12:18 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
4:20 P.M.	4:38 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
10:20 A.M.	10:38 A.M.	6,7

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:20 A.M.	8:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
5:00 P.M.	5:40 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7:40 A.M.	8:20 A.M.	6,7

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
10:20 A.M.	11:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
6:00 P.M.	6:40 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
8:40 A.M.	9:20 A.M.	6,7

SAIPAN TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:00 P.M.	1:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2:00 P.M.	3:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7:00 P.M.	8:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
11:00 A.M.	12:00 P.M.	6,7

GUAM TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1:30 P.M.	2:30 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
5:30 P.M.	6:30 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
9:00 P.M.	10:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
12:30 P.M.	1:30 P.M.	6,7

ROTA TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:20 A.M.	8:55 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
4:25 P.M.	5:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

GUAM TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
9:25 A.M.	10:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3:30 P.M.	4:05 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

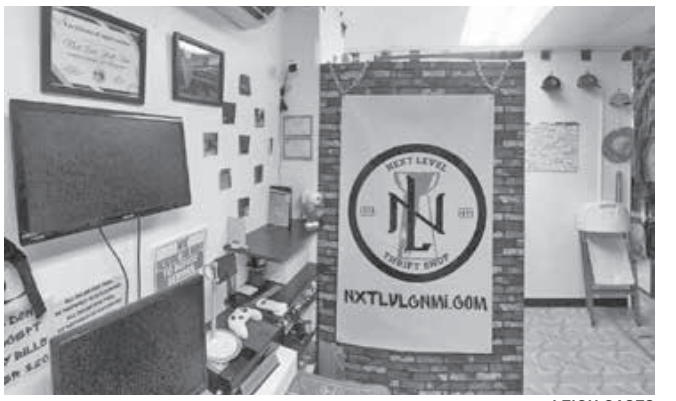
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Upgrade your wardrobe at Next Level Thrift

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

LEIGH GASES
The Next Level Thrift and Consignment Shop's manager Kyle Hocog jumps in front of the shop's location at the Suite 303 in the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe.



LEIGH GASES
The Next Level Thrift and Consignment Shop is for those ready to step up their wardrobe to the next level. Make your way down to check out their pre-loved, quality apparel and find out what you can mix and match to fit your style.

Step up your game and spruce up your wardrobe at the Next Level Thrift and Consignment Shop located on the 3rd floor, suite 303 of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe.

You will never know what you may find—a piece of clothing, accessory, shoes, and other items that may be added as bling into your wardrobe and mix and match for a style uniquely your own, as you venture through the intimate and cozy space of the shop.

With scented candles made by Candle J and beautiful handcrafted jewelry by Islandry670, it can be your one stop shop for gifts or a treat just for yourself.

Either way, the friendly face of shop manager Kyle Hocog is always ready and willing to help you find that missing piece, because as they say—one man's trash is another man's treasure.

Items in the shop range from as low as $5 to $35. On certain Saturdays, they have promotions that are out of the ordinary. A promotion called "Special Sale Saturday" takes place, in which for a fixed price you purchase a bag, and shoppers can fill it up with as much as they can as long as they are able to close it. The conditions are: there is a time limit, the bags will be provided by the staff, and it's on a first-come, first-serve basis. Consignment items are excluded from the sale.

The shop, under the non-profit Latte Training Academy, opened last May and since then has been providing its customers with quality, pre-loved items. It's open from 8am to 5pm, Tuesday to Friday, and 9am to 3pm on Saturday.

Hocog said that along with being a thrift shop, it ultimately is also a training ground for customer service and retail operations for students in the academy.

"The shop came into creation because we understand that retail plays a huge role in the CNMI. Whether it's business owners or even people getting into the retail industry for work, that's kind of what the training program touches on: customer service and retail operations. We thought it would be a good way to leverage what we do to help train the CNMI workforce. Here, we do on the job training where they can get hands-on, practical learning, on top of the online curriculum that they have to learn," said Hocog.

So, not only does it provide customers with unique, affordable, and quality clothing, it also empowers small businesses through consignment opportunities, as well as training and developing the workforce within the customer service and retail industry.

"On behalf of the Latte Training Academy and the Next Level Thrift Shop, we invite you to shop at the Next Level Thrift and Consignment Shop to bring your wardrobe up to the next level.

The Latte Training Academy, Inc. is a non-profit organization aimed at providing skilled and certified vocational training and career enhancement programs which are focused on the development of the local workforce.

LEIGH GASES
The Next Level Thrift and Consignment Shop greets you with its urban feel as you get lost in heaps of clothing you can use to upgrade your wardrobe to the next level.

Raimondo seeks to rally the US behind $52 billion chip program

WASHINGTON (AP)—On State of the Union night, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo strode down the aisle and found her seat in front of Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell.

McConnell, not known to waste words, complimented Raimondo on a recent writeup about her efforts to restore the U.S. as the world leader in advanced computer chips.

Factories, autos, appliances, electronics, toys, toothbrushes and weapons systems all depend on semiconductors, and the need for global supremacy in this small sector of the world economy is a rare area where Republicans and Democrats share the same vision.

"Nice George Will article," McConnell said, referring to the conservative columnist's comments on Raimondo.

"Thank you. I'm going to implement that and I'm going to do it responsibly," Raimondo said of the $52 billion that lawmakers last year approved for research and the construction of semiconductor factories. She stressed to the Kentucky senator that national security was at stake.

"That's why I voted for it," McConnell said.

After a slew of chip companies announced new U.S. factories, Raimondo is in the process of delivering on the government's promised financial commitment. Starting next week, the application process will begin for semiconductor firms seeking to qualify for $39 billion in government backing to help fund their expansion.

Joey P. San Nicolas
Attorney-at-Law
San Nicolas Law Office, LLC
2nd Floor, Island Commercial Center, Rm. 203
Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7659 | Fax: (670) 234-9218
Email: jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net

Attorney for Petitioners Juliette M. Teregeyo and Erwin Jay Hofschneider Borja

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION TO APPOINT GENERAL GUARDIANSHIP FOR: LYAM EDWARD MANGLONA VILLAGOMEZ D.O.B.: 10/30/2011 Minor Child, By JULIETTE MARIE MANGLONA TEREGEYO and ERWIN JAY HOFSCHNEIDER BORJA, Petitioners.

FCD GU Civil Action No. 22-0392

NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointments of Guardianship for the above-named by **JULIETTE MARIE MANGLONA TEREGEYO and ERWIN JAY HOFSCHNEIDER BORJA**, Petitioners, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court and is open for review at the office of the Clerk of the said Court in Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Room 217A, Guma Hustisia Building, Susupe, Saipan, NMI, before Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio on the 13th day of March, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.or as soon thereafter.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/
Deputy Clerk of Court

DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

P. O. Box 501304, Saipan MP 96950 | Gualo Rai Center, Saipan
Tel. No. 664-8300 FAX NO. 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

As of February 24, 2023

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DCRM OFFICE:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. Sakura CNMI Corporation dba Sakura Marine Sports	12/29/2022 CRM-MD2022-0005	Temporary Beach Concession	Garapan, Saipan	Minor Development	ON HOLD*
2. Let's Go Tour Company dba Sea-Touch	01/10/2023 APC2022-0016	Kayak & Paddleboard	Garapan, Saipan	Lagoon & Reef	Approved* 2/14/2023
3. Westlake Motor, LLC	01/11/2023 APC2023-0019	Westlake Motor, LLC Rental Car Facility	San Roque, Saipan	Wetlands & Mangroves	Under Review*
4. Beachfront Development, LLC	1/24/2023 APC2023-0020	Three Story Multi-Family Apartment	Garapan, Saipan	Shoreline	Approved* 2/10/2023
5. Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC)	2/02/2023 CRM-MD2023-0010	Replacement of the Sadog Tasi Waste Water Treatment Plant Clarifier	Sadog Tasi, Saipan	Minor Development	Approved* 2/16/2023
6. Rota Mayor's Office	2/07/2023 RSm-2023-001	As Matmos Pavilion	As Matmos, Rota	Shoreline/Cliffline	Under Review*
7. Rota Mayor's Office	2/07/2023 RSm-2023-002	Pona Point Pavilion	Pona Point, Rota	Shoreline/Cliffline	Under Review*
8. Asia Pacific, INC. dba Asia Marine Sports	02/09/2023 CRM-MD2023-0011	Temporary Beach Concession	Garapan, Saipan	Minor Development	ON HOLD*
9. Triple J Saipan, Inc.	02/14/2023 CRM-MD2023-0012	Triple J 5K Color Run/Walk	Garapan, Saipan	Minor Development	Under Review*
10. CNS, Inc	02/17/2023 CRM-MD2023-0013	Dry-Dock	Tanapag, Saipan	Minor Development	Under Review*
11. Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC)	2/17/2023 APC2023-0023	San Antonio Waterline Replacement Project	San Antonio, Saipan	Shoreline	Under Review*

NMIAC §15-10-210 of the CRM Rules and Regulations requires all permit applications to be published in a newspaper for general circulation within the CNMI within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the DCRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the DCRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APCs) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local DCRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a DCRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the DCRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the DCRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the DCRM Regulations.

Nation

US mass killings linked to extremism spiked over last decade

WASHINGTON (AP)—The number of U.S. mass killings linked to extremism over the past decade was at least three times higher than the total from any 10-year period since the 1970s, according to a report by the Anti-Defamation League.

The report—provided to The Associated Press ahead of its public release Thursday—also found that all extremist killings identified in 2022 were linked to right-wing extremism, with an especially high number linked to white supremacy. They include a racist mass shooting at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York, that left 10 Black shoppers dead and a mass shooting that killed five people an LGBT nightclub in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that we live in an age of extremist mass killings," the report from the group's Center on Extremism says.

Between two and seven extremism-related mass killings occurred every decade from the 1970s to the 2000s, but in the 2010s that number skyrocketed to 21, the report found.

AP

Investigators stand outside during a moment of silence for the victims of the Buffalo supermarket shooting outside the Tops Friendly Market on May 21, 2022, in Buffalo, N.Y.

The trend has since continued with five extremist mass killings in 2021 and 2022, as many as there were during the first decade of the new millennium.

The number of victims has risen as well. Between 2010 and 2020, 164 people died in ideological extremist-related mass killings, according to the report. That's much more than any decade except the 1990s, when the bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City killed 168 people.

Extremist killings are those carried out by people with ties to extreme movements and ideologies.

Several factors combined to drive the numbers up between 2010 and 2020. There were shootings inspired by the rise of the Islamic State group, as well as a handful targeting police officers after civilian shootings and others linked to the increasing promotion of violence by white supremacists, said Mark Pitcavage, a senior research fellow at the ADL's Center on Extremism.

The center tracks slayings linked to various forms of extremism in the United States and compiles them in an annual report. It tracked 25 extremism-related killings last year, marking a decrease from the 33 the year before.

Ninety-three percent of the killings in 2022 were committed with firearms. The report also noted that no police officers were killed by extremists last year, for the first time since 2011.

With the waning of the Islamic State group, the main threat in the near future will likely be white supremacist shooters, the report found. The increase in the number of mass killing attempts, meanwhile, is one of the most alarming trends in recent years, said Center on Extremism Vice President Oren Segal.

"We cannot stand idly by and accept this as the new norm," Segal said.

ACROSS THE NATION

Former Arizona AG sat on records refuting election fraud

PHOENIX (AP)—Arizona's former attorney general suppressed findings by his investigators who concluded there was no basis for allegations that the 2020 election was marred by widespread fraud, according to documents released Wednesday by his successor. Democratic Attorney General Kris Mayes, who took office last month, said the records show the 2020 election "was conducted fairly and accurately by election officials." Previous Attorney General Mark Brnovich, a Republican, never released a March 2022 summary of investigative findings, which ruled out most of the fraud claims spread by allies and supporters of former President Donald Trump. Yet a month later, he released an "interim report" that claimed his investigation "revealed serious vulnerabilities that must be addressed and raises questions about the 2020 election in Arizona." He released his April report despite pushback from his investigators who said some of its claims were refuted by their probe. Brnovich was at the time in the midst of a Republican Party primary for U.S. Senate and facing fierce criticism from Trump, who claimed he wasn't doing enough to prosecute election fraud.

Jan. 6 rioter who threatened Ocasio-Cortez online gets 3 years

A Texas man who threatened U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on Twitter after he stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021 was sentenced on Wednesday to more than three years in prison. Garret Miller was wearing a shirt that read "I Was There, Washington D.C., January 6, 2021" with a picture on President Donald Trump on it when law enforcement officers showed up at his Dallas-area home to arrest him two weeks after the riot. Miller has already spent more than two years behind bars since his arrest, and with credit for good behavior, he's expected to serve another eight months, according to his lawyer, F. Clinton Broden. Miller, a 36-year-old from Richardson, was among the many rioters who thoroughly documented their actions that day in a flurry of social media posts. After Miller posted a selfie showing himself inside the Capitol, a friend wrote, "bro you got in?! Nice!" Miller replied, "just wanted to incriminate myself a little lol," according to court papers. ***(AP)***

Sheriff IDs 3 climbers killed in Washington state avalanche

SEATTLE (AP)—A sheriff's office in Washington state on Wednesday released the identities of three climbers killed in an avalanche on a remote, jagged peak in the Cascade Mountains, saying they were members of a climbing club based in New York. The victims were Seong Cho, a 54-year-old male Korean citizen from West Hartford, Connecticut; Jeannie Lee, a 60-year-old woman from Bayside, New York; and Yun Park, a 66-year-old man from Palisades Park, New Jersey, the Chelan County Sheriff's Office said. They were killed Sunday as they ascended a steep, snow-packed gulley on the 8,705-foot (2,653-meter) Colchuck Peak, about 70 miles (115 kilometers) east of Seattle. A fourth member of their party was also caught up in the slide, but suffered only minor injuries and was able to verify that the three had died before additional avalanches covered at least two of the bodies. The avalanche was the the deadliest in the U.S. since four backcountry skiers were killed in an avalanche in Utah two years ago.

Flights canceled, highways closed as winter storm wallops US

PIERRE, S.D. (AP)—A brutal winter storm closed interstate highways from Arizona to Wyoming Wednesday, trapped drivers in cars, knocked out power to hundreds of thousands of people and prompted the first blizzard warning in Southern California in decades—and the worst won't be over for several days.

Few places were untouched by the wild weather, including some at the opposite extreme: long-standing record highs were broken in cities in the Midwest, mid-Atlantic and Southeast.

The wintry mix hit hard in the northern U.S., closing schools, offices, even shutting down the Minnesota Legislature. Travel was difficult. Weather contributed to more than 1,600 U.S. flight cancellations, according to the tracking service FlightAware. More than 400 of those were due to arrive or depart from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Another 5,000-plus flights were delayed across the country.

At Denver International Airport, Taylor Dotson, her husband, Reggie, and their 4-year-old daughter, Raegan, faced a two-hour flight delay to Nashville on their way home to Belvidere, Tennessee.

Reggie Dotson was in Denver to interview for a job as an airline pilot.

"I think that's kind of funny that we've experienced these types of delays when that's what he's looking into getting into now as a career," Taylor Dotson said.

The roads were just as bad.

In Wyoming, rescuers tried to reach people stranded in vehicles but high winds and drifting snow created a "near-impossible situation" for them, said Sgt. Jeremy Beck of the Wyoming Highway Patrol.

"They know their locations, it's just hard for them to get them," he said.

Wyoming's Transportation Department posted on social media that roads across much of the southern part of the state were impassable.

In the Pacific Northwest, high winds and heavy snow in the Cascade Mountains prevented search teams from reaching the bodies of three climbers killed in an avalanche on Washington's Colchuck Peak over the weekend. Two experts from the Northwest Avalanche Center were hiking to the scene Wednesday to determine if conditions might permit a recovery attempt later this week.

Powerful winds were the biggest problem in California, toppling trees and power lines. By Wednesday evening, more than 65,000 customers in the state were without electricity, according to PowerOutage.us.

A 1-year-old child was critically injured Tuesday evening when a redwood crashed onto a home in Boulder Creek, a community in the Santa Cruz Mountains south of San Francisco, KTVU reported.

For the first time since 1989, a blizzard warning was issued for the mountains of Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, effective from 4 a.m. Thursday to 4 p.m. Saturday, the National Weather Service said.

"Nearly the entire population of CA will be able to see snow from some vantage point later this week if they look in the right direction (i.e., toward the highest hills in vicinity)," UCLA climate scientist Daniel Swain tweeted.

A more than 200-mile (320-kilometer) stretch of Interstate 40 from central Arizona to the New Mexico line closed due to snow, rain and wind gusts of up to 80 mph (129 kph). More than 8,000 customers were without power in Arizona.

In the northern U.S.—a region accustomed to heavy snow — the snowfall could be significant. More than 18 inches (46 centimeters) may pile up in parts of Minnesota and Wisconsin, the National Weather Service said Wednesday evening. According to the weather service, the biggest snow event on record in the Twin Cities was 28.4 inches (72 centimeters) from Oct. 31 through Nov. 3, 1991.

Temperatures could plunge as low as minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 29 degrees Celsius) Thursday and to minus 25 F (minus 32 C) Friday in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Wind chills may fall to minus 50 F (minus 46 C), said Nathan Rick, a meteorologist in Grand Forks.

Asia

China blasts US official's Taiwan visit

BEIJING (AP)—China on Wednesday sharply criticized a visit to Taiwan by a senior Pentagon official and reaffirmed it has sanctioned Lockheed Martin and a unit of Raytheon for supplying military equipment to the self-governing island democracy.

The comments from the Cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office underscore the dramatic deterioration in relations between Beijing and Washington over Taiwan, technology, spying allegations, and, increasingly, Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Asked about the reported visit by Michael Chase, deputy assistant secretary of defense for China, office spokesperson Zhu Fenglian said China "resolutely opposes any official interaction and military collaboration" between the U.S. and Taiwan.

Efforts by Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party to cement the island's independence with foreign assistance are "doomed to failure," Zhu told reporters.

China considers Taiwan part of its territory to be brought under its control by force if necessary, and has been stepping up its military and diplomatic harassment. The sides split amid civil war in 1949, and China's authoritarian Communist Party has never held sway over the island.

A Pentagon spokesperson did not comment directly on Chase's visit, repeating that "our commitment to Taiwan is rock-solid and contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and within the region." Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has said it had no information about any such visit.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said a "new round of tensions" in the Taiwan Strait was a result of the Taiwanese authorities' attempts to "seek independence with U.S. support, as well as the U.S. intention to contain China with Taiwan."

"We urge the U.S. to ... stop any form of official U.S.-Taiwan contacts, stop meddling in the Taiwan issue and stop creating new factors of tension in the Taiwan Strait," Wang said at a daily briefing.

Tensions between the U.S. and China again ratcheted up last month after Washington accused Beijing of sending a spy balloon that was shot down over the American East Coast. Secretary of State Antony Blinken canceled a trip to Beijing in the wake of the incident and said over the weekend that the United States was concerned China would provide weapons to Russia for its war in Ukraine.

China, which has declared a "no limits" friendship with Russia, has pointedly refused to criticize Moscow's actions, blaming the U.S. and NATO for provoking the Kremlin, and has blasted the punishing sanctions imposed on Russia. Russia, in turn, has strongly backed China over Taiwan.

On a visit to Moscow Tuesday, the Communist Party's top diplomat Wang Yi said relations between Moscow and Beijing are "solid as a rock" and will "stand the test of the volatile international situation."

Russia and China have an "excellent opportunity to continue close strategic cooperation and contacts to protect our shared strategic interests," Wang said.

Wang Wenbin, the Foreign Ministry spokesperson, said he had no information about a possible visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping to Moscow this spring.

A delegation of U.S. lawmakers visiting Taiwan met on Tuesday with President Tsai Ing-wen, who said she looked for increased cooperation on issues from security to climate change.

PH eyes South China Sea patrols with US, Australia

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines is in talks with the United States as well as Australia on future joint patrols in the South China Sea, where China's increasingly aggressive actions in the disputed waters are causing concern, top defense officials in the three nations said Wednesday.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin called his Philippine counterpart, Carlito Galvez Jr., to reiterate Washington's support and commitment to help defend its oldest treaty ally in Asia after a Chinese coast guard aimed a military-grade laser at a Philippine patrol vessel near a disputed shoal.

The Feb. 6 incident off Second Thomas Shoal briefly blinded some of the Filipino crew and prompted Manila to file a strongly worded diplomatic protest. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. also summoned China's ambassador to express his concern.

"The two leaders discussed proposals to deepen operational cooperation and enhance the United States and the Philippines' shared security, including the recent decision to resume combined maritime activities in the South China Sea," according to details of the phone conversation provided by Pentagon press secretary Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder.

During Austin's visit to Manila this month, Galvez and U.S. officials had said the allies agreed to carry out joint patrols.

Separately, Galvez and visiting Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles said in a news conference on Wednesday that they were looking at Australian and Philippine forces possibly carrying out their joint patrols in the busy waterway.

As countries asserting the rule of law, including the 1982 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, in the South China Sea, where a bulk of Australia's trade traverses, "we did talk today about the possibility of exploring joint patrols," Marles said, without elaborating.

Australian and Philippine forces have undertaken joint patrols off the southern Philippines in the past to counter terrorist threats, Galvez said, and added, "We can do it again."

Aside from the United States, Australia is the only other country that struck a defense agreement with the Philippines for joint combat exercises in the country. The Philippine Constitution prohibits the permanent basing of foreign troops and their involvement in local combat.

Austin announced after meeting Marcos on Feb. 2 that the Philippines had approved an expanded U.S. military presence by allowing rotating batches of U.S. forces to stay in four more Philippine military camps, in addition to five others.

It was the latest move by the Biden administration to strengthen an arc of military alliances in the Indo-Pacific to better counter China, including in any future confrontation over Taiwan.

Austin reaffirmed in his talk with Galvez on Wednesday the U.S. Defense Department's "commitment to bolstering the Philippines' defense capabilities and capacity to resist coercion as the allies develop a security-sector assistance roadmap." No details of the mutual security plan were immediately provided.

China opposes military activities involving the U.S. and its allies, especially in the South China Sea, and has warned Washington not to meddle in what it says is a purely Asian dispute.

World

NATO chief sees 'some signs' China could back Russia's war

AP

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg speaks during an interview after meeting U.S. President Joe Biden and the Bucharest Nine leaders in Warsaw, Poland, Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2023.

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—NATO's chief said Wednesday that the military alliance has seen "some signs" that China may be planning to support Russia in its war in Ukraine, and strongly urged Beijing to desist from what would be a violation of international law.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg also told The Associated Press in an interview that the alliance, while not a party to the war, will support Ukraine "for as long as it takes."

Asked whether NATO has any indication that China might be ready to provide arms or other support to Russia's war, Stoltenberg said:

"We have seen some signs that they may be planning for that and of course NATO allies, the United States, have been warning against it because this is something that should not happen. China should not support Russia's illegal war."

Stoltenberg said potential Chinese assistance would amount to providing "(direct) support to a blatant violation of international law, and of course (as) a member of the U.N. security council China should not in any way support violation of the U.N. charter, or international law."

On Wednesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted the Chinese Communist Party's most senior foreign policy official — Wang Yi — raising concern in the West that Beijing might be ready to offer Moscow stronger support in the almost year-old war.

China has pointedly refused to criticize the invasion of Ukraine while echoing Moscow's claim that the U.S. and NATO were to blame for provoking the Kremlin. China, Russia and South Africa are holding naval drills in the Indian Ocean this week.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said any Chinese involvement in the Kremlin's war effort would be a "serious problem." Ties between China and the U.S. are under severe strain over Taiwan and other issues.

Stoltenberg spoke to The Associated Press in Warsaw, following a meeting of NATO's nine eastern flank members with U.S. President Joe Biden on the region's security.

New quake brings fresh losses to residents of Turkey, Syria

ISTANBUL (AP)—Survivors of the earthquake that jolted Turkey and Syria 15 days ago, killing tens of thousands of people and leaving hundreds of thousands of others homeless, dealt with more trauma and loss Tuesday after another deadly quake and aftershocks rocked the region.

The 6.4 magnitude earthquake that struck Monday evening had its epicenter in the Defne district of Turkey's Hatay province, which was of the area's worst affected by the Feb. 6 magnitude 7.8 quake that killed nearly 46,000 people in the two countries.

Turkey's disaster management authority, AFAD, said the new quake killed six people and injured 294 others, including 18 who were in critical condition. In Syria, a woman and a girl died as a result of panic during the earthquake in the provinces of Hama and Tartus, pro-government media said.

Monday's quake was felt in Jordan, Cyprus, Israel, Lebanon and Egypt. A magnitude 5.8 quake followed, along with dozens of aftershocks. The White Helmets, northwest Syria's civil defense organization, said about 190 people suffered injuries in rebel-held areas and that several flimsy buildings collapsed but there were no reports of anyone trapped under the debris.

In Turkey, teacher Zuher Capar, 42, said he was mourning the loss of relatives in the original earthquake and having a meal with his aunt and uncle near the Hatay town of Samandag when they felt Monday's temblor.

"It shook a little, then it grew strong," he said. "The electricity went and there were screams everywhere. There were small children in the house. They were screaming, my aunt was crying."

On Feb. 6, Capar rushed to try to help his cousin, the cousin's wife and the couple's small children out of the rubble of their collapsed home, but they did not survive.

"We had barely overcome the sadness (from the first earthquake)," he said.

While his large family's home withstood the quake earlier in the month, it was damaged on Monday. Capar said they are too frightened to sleep there and plan to stay in a large tent and cars.

Off The Wall

Pay-Per-Chew: More restaurants are trying subscription programs

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Consumers are willing to pay monthly subscription fees for streaming services, pet food and even toilet paper. And now some restaurants are betting they'll do the same for their favorite meals.

Large chains like Panera and P.F. Chang's as well as neighborhood hangouts are increasingly experimenting with the subscription model as a way to ensure steady revenue and customer visits. Some offer unlimited drinks or free delivery for a monthly fee; others will bring out your favorite appetizer each time you visit.

They're following a trend: The average American juggled 6.7 subscriptions in 2022, up from 4.2 in 2019, according to Rocket Money, a personal finance app.

"This is just another way for customers to provide a level of support and joy and love for our offerings," said Matt Baker, the chef at Gravitas, a Michelin-starred restaurant in Washington.

For $130 per month, Gravitas Supper Club subscribers get a three-course takeout meal for two. Baker said Gravitas shifted to takeout during the pandemic but saw demand fizzle once its dining room reopened. The Supper Club—which serves about 60 diners per month—keeps that revenue flowing.

The upscale Chinese chain P.F. Chang's also saw an opportunity to increase to-go orders with its subscription plan, which launched in September. For $6.99 per month, members get free delivery, among other perks.

Other restaurants are experimenting with memberships, which let diners pre-pay toward their visits.

El Lopo, a San Francisco bar, has 26 members in its Take-Care-Of-Me Club. They pay either $89 per month for $100 in dining credits or $175 per month for $200 in credits. When members come in, El Lopo starts bringing out their favorite dishes. Each visit, they can gift a free drink to anyone in the bar.

El Lopo owner Daniel Azarkman started the club in March 2021 to encourage patrons to return as the pandemic eased. Now, he's hearing from restaurants all over the country who are interested in starting similar programs.

"What it really achieves is getting them in more often," he said.

Rick Camac, executive director of Industry Relations at the Institute of Culinary Education, said he expects many more restaurants to offer subscriptions in the coming years. Consumers are accustomed to them, he said, and the regular monthly income helps restaurants manage their cash flow.

Dog vs shark standoff electrifies tourists on a Bahamas boat tour

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—The sight of a massive hammerhead shark was a rare treat for 32 travelers on a tour boat in the Bahamas this week. But then, something stranger still: A dog dove from a nearby dock to confront the monstrous sea creature.

Tourists aboard the four-hour excursion can be heard shouting and pleading with the dog to turn back, in a video circulating on social media. "Oh my god!" and "Get out baby!" and "Stop going after it!"

The dog ignored them and paddled after the 12-foot shark, which thrashed as the two animals circled each other in transparent turquoise waters near a private island in the southern Bahamas. Then the shark swam away slowly, much to the delight and surprise of the crowd.

"I don't think the shark is going to mess with him!" exclaimed one man.

The shark had emerged from under the boat during a tour Wednesday in the southern Bahamas organized by Exuma Water Sports.

Company reservations manager Rebecca Lightbourn told The Associated Press on Friday that the black-and-tan dog always runs along the shore to greet the boat when it passes that island. But it's the first time it was seen diving in.

"I guess this time the dog decided he wanted to protect his house or play with a really big fish in the water, so he went after it," Lightbourn said.

When the shark swam away from the pier, the medium-sized dog scrambled back onto the rocks and loped away, earning applause from the tourists. The boat then headed to a popular area where tourists jump into the water with the renowned Bahamian swimming pigs.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Cold-blooded: Abandoned alligator rescued from Brooklyn lake

NEW YORK (AP)—It's no urban legend: An alligator was found in a chilly New York City lake on Sunday, far from the subtropical and tropical climates where such creatures thrive. The 4-foot (1.2-meter) reptile was pulled from Prospect Park Lake in Brooklyn around 8:30 a.m. and taken to an animal care center and then the Bronx Zoo for medical treatment and rehabilitation. City officials said the gator appeared lethargic and possibly cold shocked. It was likely dumped as an unwanted pet, they said. Releasing animals in city parks is illegal. Police are investigating. For years, New Yorkers have pondered the myth that alligators roam the city's sewer system, even celebrating Alligators in the Sewers Day as an unofficial February holiday. Sightings like Sunday's help keep the urban legend alive, but experts throw cold water on the sewer theory. Alligators aren't suited to the sewer system's frigid, toxic environment, they say.

Fowl-free: McDonald's debuts plant-based McNuggets

McDonald's McNuggets are going fowl-free. The Chicago-based fast food giant is introducing plant-based McNuggets next week. Germany will be the first market to get them. McPlant Nuggets—made from peas, corn and wheat with a tempura batter—are the second product McDonald's has co-developed with Beyond Meat, an El Segundo, California-based maker of plant-based meats. McDonald's has been selling a McPlant burger since 2021. McDonald's said the nationwide nugget rollout to more than 1,400 restaurants in Germany follows a limited-time test at nine restaurants in the Stuttgart area in August. McDonald's will also start selling the McPlant burger in Germany next week. Availability of the McPlant nuggets and burger in future markets will depend on customer demand, McDonald's said. European customers have generally been more receptive to McDonald's plant-based meat products than those in the U.S. The McPlant burger is now a permanent menu item in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Austria and the Netherlands. Last month, McDonald's rolled out the Double McPlant burger in the U.K. and Ireland. ***(AP)***

Science & Technology

JSWT discovers six massive galaxies near cosmic dawn

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—Astronomers have discovered what appear to be massive galaxies dating back to within 600 million years of the Big Bang, suggesting the early universe may have had a stellar fast-track that produced these "monsters."

While the new James Webb Space Telescope has spotted even older galaxies, dating to within a mere 300 million years of the beginning of the universe, it's the size and maturity of these six apparent mega-galaxies that stun scientists. They reported their findings Wednesday.

Lead researcher Ivo Labbe of Australia's Swinburne University of Technology and his team expected to find little baby galaxies this close to the dawn of the universe—not these whoppers.

"While most galaxies in this era are still small and only gradually growing larger over time," he said in an email, "there are a few monsters that fast-track to maturity. Why this is the case or how this would work is unknown."

Each of the six objects looks to weigh billions of times more than our sun. In one of them, the total weight of all its stars may be as much as 100 billion times greater than our sun, according to the scientists, who published their findings in the journal Nature.

Yet these galaxies are believed to be extremely compact, squeezing in as many stars as our own Milky Way, but in a relatively tiny slice of space, according to Labbe.

Labbe said he and his team didn't think the results were real at first—that there couldn't be galaxies as mature as the Milky Way so early in time—and they still need to be confirmed. The objects appeared so big and bright that some members of the team thought they had made a mistake.

"We were mind-blown, kind of incredulous," Labbe said.

The Pennsylvania State University's Joel Leja, who took part in the study, calls them "universe breakers."

"The revelation that massive galaxy formation began extremely early in the history of the universe upends what many of us had thought was settled science," Leja said in a statement. "It turns out we found something so unexpected it actually creates problems for science. It calls the whole picture of early galaxy formation into question."

These galaxy observations were among the first data set that came from the $10 billion Webb telescope, launched just over a year ago. NASA and the European Space Agency's Webb is considered the successor to the Hubble Space Telescope, coming up on the 33rd anniversary of its launch.

Unlike Hubble, the bigger and more powerful Webb can peer through clouds of dust with its infrared vision and discover galaxies previously unseen. Scientists hope to eventually observe the first stars and galaxies formed following the creation of the universe 13.8 billion years ago.

Science Matters
Perovskite: Remember that name
Materials using the mineral perovskite are inspiring hopes that they could be used in radically new optical-electronic devices – if some difficult problems can be resolved.
Perovskite
Mineral discovered in Ural Mountains; contains calcium titanium oxide crystals
A natural semiconductor useful in electronic applications
Named after the Russian mineralogist Lev Perovsky (1792-1856)
Adjustable materials
Metal halide perovskites
Have optical properties that can be tuned by adjusting electric charge, temperature, pressure or chemicals
Perovskite lasers and LEDs
Solar cells
Medical imaging
Light-detecting retinal implant
Smart sensor wristband
Two worries to resolve
Long term stability of perovskite materials is worse than that of silicon-based devices
Toxic lead in perovskite means devices have to be sealed to prevent leaks; fabrication and disposal and recycling must be done safely
Source: He Dong and Chenxin Ran of Northwestern Polytechnical University (Xi'an, China); Ron Lavinski crystal photo
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service © 2023 TNS

Life & Style

V&A museum acquires Bowie's archive, will put it on display

LONDON (AP)—From Major Tom to Ziggy Stardust and Aladdin Sane, the many faces and inspirations of David Bowie are getting a permanent home in London.

Britain's Victoria & Albert Museum announced Thursday that it has acquired Bowie's archive of more than 80,000 items as a gift from the late musician's estate. The trove of costumes, musical instruments, letters, lyrics, photos and more will be opened to the public at a new arts center dedicated to the chameleon-like pop icon.

Bowie

The David Bowie Center for the Study of Performing Arts is due to open in 2025 as part of V&A East Storehouse, an offshoot of the U.K.'s national museum of art, design and performance that is being built in east London's Olympic Park.

The V&A said the center will let fans and researchers gain insights into the creative process of Bowie, who died in 2016 at the age of 69.

Kate Bailey, the museum's senior curator of theater and performance, said the archive was an "extraordinary" record of a creator whose "life was art."

"Bowie's a polymath, he's multifaceted. He was inspired by all genres and disciplines," she said. "He's an artist who was working really in 360—drawing from literature, but also drawing from art history ... (and) the places that he'd been to."

The musician—born plain old David Jones in the London suburbs in 1947—reinvented himself restlessly, creating and shedding personas as he moved through musical styles from folk-rock to glam to soul to electronica.

He created a series of larger-than-life stage characters, mining influences ranging from German Expressionist cinema to Japanese Kabuki theater. In turn he has influenced musicians, filmmakers, fashion designers and advertisers.

Some of the items in the archive formed part of "David Bowie Is," a multimedia exhibition that toured the world after a sold-out run at the V&A in London in 2013.

Some items are iconic, such as a multicolored quilted jumpsuit designed by Freddie Burretti for Bowie's alien rock star creation Ziggy Stardust, Kansai Yamamoto's futuristic creations for the Aladdin Sane tour in 1973 or the Union Jack coat designed by Bowie and Alexander McQueen for the cover of 1997's "Earthling" album.

Nipsey Hussle's killer gets 60 years to life in prison

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Los Angeles judge on Wednesday sentenced the man convicted of gunning down Nipsey Hussle to 60 years to life in prison after hearing testaments to the immense cost of the killing of the hip-hop star and neighborhood leader, and of the lifetime of mental illness, abuse and struggle of the man who shot him.

Hussle

Superior Court Judge H. Clay Jacke II handed down the sentence to Eric R. Holder Jr., 33, who was found guilty of the 2019 first-degree murder of the 33-year-old Grammy-nominated hip-hop artist outside the clothing store Hussle founded, the Marathon, in the South Los Angeles neighborhood where both men grew up in very similar circumstances.

"I am very mindful of what was presented as to Mr. Holder' mental health," Jacke said. "I am also mindful of the devastation caused to the victims and their families. I believe this sentence balances the two."

After the monthlong trial, jurors in July also convicted Holder of two counts of attempted voluntary manslaughter and two counts of assault with a firearm for gunfire that hit two other men at the scene who survived.

Jacke sentenced Holder to 25 years to life for the murder, 25 more for a firearm sentencing enhancement and 10 for assault with a firearm. He set several other sentencing additions and ordered that others run concurrent. He also gave Holder credit for the nearly four years he has served since the shooting.

Holder, dressed in orange jail attire, stared straight ahead throughout the proceedings and did not react when the sentence was read, and spoke only to tell the judge he understood the circumstances when he was asked.

Finalists announced for the Lukas Prize Project book awards

NEW YORK (AP)—Beverly Gage's J. Edgar Hoover biography "G-Man," Robert Samuels' and Toluse Olorunnipa's "His Name is George Floyd" and Linda Villarosa's study of racism and its effects, "Under the Skin," are among the finalists for awards handed out by the Lukas Prize Project.

The project was established in 1998 and named for the late author and investigative journalist J. Anthony Lukas. The finalists were announced Wednesday by the Columbia Journalism School and the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University. Winners will be announced March 21.

Villarosa and Samuels and Olorunnipa are nominees for the J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize, a $10,000 award for an outstanding "work of narrative nonfiction on a topic of American political or social concern."

The other finalists are Rachel Aviv's "Strangers to Ourselves: Unsettled Minds and the Stories That Make Us," Lyndsie Bourgon's "Tree Thieves: Crime and Survival in North America's Woods" and Jack Lowery's "It Was Vulgar & It Was Beautiful: How AIDS Activists Used Art to Fight a Pandemic."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

'Ted Lasso' star Waddingham to co-host Eurovision contest

LONDON (AP)—"Ted Lasso" star Hannah Waddingham, Ukrainian musician Julia Sanina and British singer Alesha Dixon will host the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest, organizers announced Wednesday. The pan-continental pop competition will take place in May in the English city of Liverpool after Britain was asked to stage the event on behalf of designated host country Ukraine. Thirty-seven countries will compete for Europe's pop crown, with semifinals held May 9 and 11 before a final on May 13. All three programs will be hosted by Waddingham, Sanin and Dixon, a TV presenter and former member of girl group Mis-Teeq. Sanina, who fronts Ukrainian alternative rock band The Hardkiss, said she was "excited to showcase Ukrainian culture and creativity, and to help put on a show to make my country proud." Waddingham, an Emmy Award winner for her role as owner of a struggling soccer team owner in hit Apple TV+ comedy "Ted Lasso," said it was "a great honor to be standing shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine, a country which has carried itself with such strength and unity." Ukraine won the right to host the pop extravaganza when its entry, folk-rap ensemble Kalush Orchestra, won the 2022 contest. British organizers say the event will be a celebration of Ukrainian culture and creativity, as well as Liverpool's musical heritage.

Latin Grammys to be held in Spain, leaving US for 1st time

MADRID (AP)—The next Latin Grammy Awards gala will be held in southern Spain, leaving the United States for the first time, the head of its organization said Wednesday. Latin Recording Academy CEO Manuel Abud and the regional president for Spain's Andalusia region made the announcement in Seville. "That the Latin Grammys will leave the United States for the first time is reason for special celebration, and what better place to hold them than Andalusia," Abud said.

Regional president Juan Manuel Moreno said the awards show would be held in November. Neither the specific dates nor the host city were given. Andalusia is home to popular tourist destinations such as Seville, Granada, Córdoba and Málaga. Moreno said the at the organizers would make the decision. The Latin Grammys were first held in Los Angeles in 2000. Last year, they took place in Las Vegas, where Spanish artist Rosalía won best album for "Motomami."

Stepmother feels slighted by teen's birthday episode

DEAR ABBY: I am a first-generation Mexican American who married into a Caucasian blended family. My husband, my stepdaughter, "Lisa," and her mother and stepfather make up a beautiful unit. I have no children. Although my family initially ruffled at my interracial marriage, they got with the program --so much so that we invited Lisa to partake in a coming-of-age rite, the quinceanera. We were excited to update and modify it as much as possible so all sets of parents, grandparents and other family could be involved.

Suddenly, when Lisa was 14—a year before the quinceanera, when planning should be ramped up, not down—my extended family went into radio silence. Despite our attempts to encourage, coach and generate excitement, we were led to believe Lisa had gotten cold feet and was reconsidering the event.

We honored her wishes and planned to find other ways to make her feel special. Two weeks before her 15th birthday, Lisa sent me an invitation for her quinceanera! Abby, words cannot express how heartbroken I feel. I was supposed to teach her about the cultural significance of what she was embarking on. I attended anyway, making sure to shower her with praise and put on a good face. However, in addition to being devastated, I was deeply offended. Of course, because no one bothered to check in, many features of the rite were handled improperly.

I've been holding my tongue for Lisa's sake since I'm afraid this could cause a rift with her mother. What I don't want is for Lisa to think my feelings have anything to do with something she may have done. For the sake of peace, is continued silence better?

MADRE DE LA QUINCEANERA

DEAR MADRE: Your feelings of hurt and frustration are understandable. But LISA CHOSE to celebrate her birthday the way she and her mom wanted—and that was her privilege. Rather than give the girl an authentic quinceanera and an understanding of the meaning of that milestone, it appears her mother and stepfather opted instead for "quinceanera-light." Do not pick a fight over this. Move on. But do continue to share with Lisa everything you have to offer -- your wisdom, your experience and your cultural heritage—from now on.

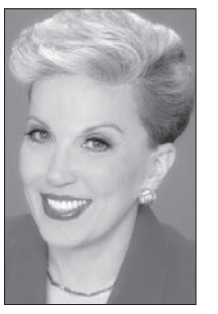
■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a domestic partnership for more than 30 years. I have suggested couples counseling for the past 10 of them, but my partner has never followed through. I'm willing to give all my assets to her so I won't worry about her future financial needs, but I don't know how to leave her without getting into an ugly war, which will make me feel guilty. Please advise.

WALKING ON EGGSHELLS

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR WALKING: Because this domestic partnership is no longer working, I do have a couple of suggestions. The first is to talk with a licensed mental health professional about the guilt you are feeling. Do this BEFORE you decide to "give away the store." My other suggestion is to consult an attorney about what kind of settlement would be fair to both of you before signing over ANY assets.

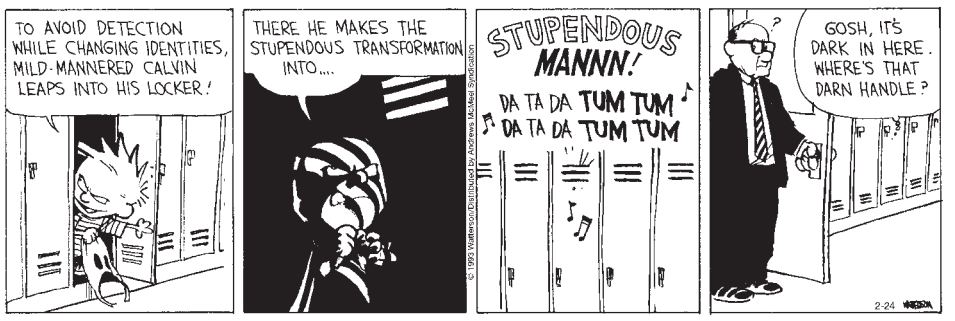
■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

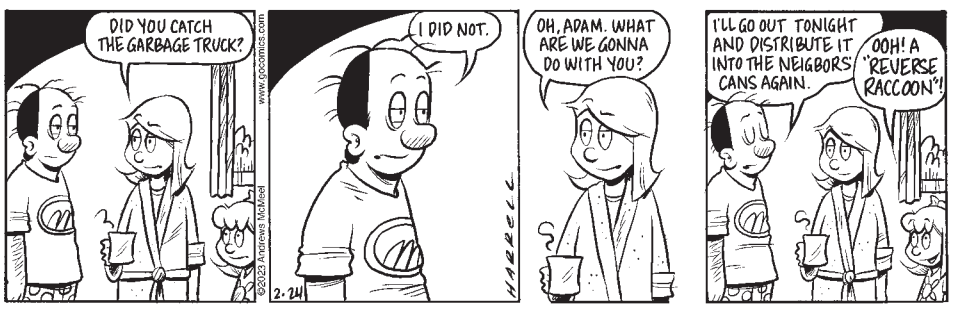

TO AVOID DETECTION WHILE CHANGING IDENTITIES, MILD-MANNERED CALVIN LEAPS INTO HIS LOCKER!
THERE HE MAKES THE STUPENDOUS TRANSFORMATION INTO....
STUPENDOUS MANNN!
DA TA DA TUM TUM
DA TA DA TUM TUM
GOSH, IT'S DARK IN HERE. WHERE'S THAT DARN HANDLE?
© 1993 Watterson Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
2-24

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

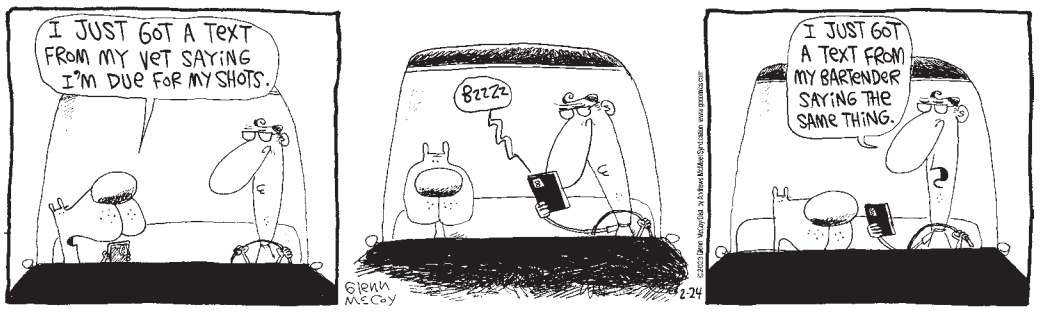
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


DID YOU CATCH THE GARBAGE TRUCK?
I DID NOT.
OH, ADAM. WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO WITH YOU?
I'LL GO OUT TONIGHT AND DISTRIBUTE IT INTO THE NEIGBORS' CANS AGAIN.
OOH! A "REVERSE RACCOON"!
www.gocomics.com
©2023 Andrews McMeel
2-24

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


I JUST GOT A TEXT FROM MY VET SAYING I'M DUE FOR MY SHOTS.
BZZZZ
I JUST GOT A TEXT FROM MY BARTENDER SAYING THE SAME THING.
GLENN MCCOY
2-24

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Mex. neighbor
4 Web addresses
8 Not us
12 Tonic's mixer
13 Business attire
14 Prefix for "six"
15 Portable, like a smartphone
17 Tears
18 Pro votes
19 Continental cash
20 Harder to find
22 Cribs
24 Spheres
25 Return to one's residence
29 Uncle, to Pedro
30 Abounds
31 "Oy —!"
32 Construction site workers
34 Existed
35 Fixes a squeak
36 Revealed
37 Set straight
40 Pear variety
41 Leeway
42 Fad toy of the '50s
46 Water, to Juan
47 Love god
48 Shock partner
49 Porgy's love
50 Catcher's aid
51 Pampering, for short

DOWN

1 "This tastes awful!"
2 "Diamonds" singer
3 Michigan city
4 Leading man?
5 Regrets
6 Dog-patch adjective
7 Norm (Abbr.)
8 Songbird
9 Estate recipient
10 Big fair, for short
11 Chapel service
16 Salon jobs
19 Concludes
20 Writer Philip
21 Met melody
22 Borscht base
23 Pet food brand
25 Make well
26 Winter wear
27 Simple
28 Kept tabs on
30 Reedy
33 Doctrines
34 Cleanse
36 Brag
37 Saudi native
38 Theater box
39 Debtors' notes
40 Inky stain
42 Haw's partner
43 Swiss canton
44 He gives a hoot
45 Chest muscle

Solution time: 25 mins.

C	H	U	B	■	B	B	S	■	L	G	B	T
H	O	R	A	■	L	I	N	■	A	E	R	O
A	L	L	Y	■	A	D	O	■	L	O	R	E
I	M	S	O	L	D	■	W	H	A	M	■	■
■	■	■	N	E	E	R	D	O	W	E	L	L
S	A	F	E	S	■	E	A	T	■	T	I	O
A	B	U	T	■	A	N	Y	■	B	R	I	O
G	E	L	■	S	T	E	■	M	A	Y	I	M
A	L	L	T	O	O	W	E	L	L	■	■	■
■	■	M	A	N	N	■	A	B	L	O	O	M
S	T	O	W	■	I	N	V	■	E	R	T	E
I	R	O	N	■	N	E	E	■	T	E	T	E
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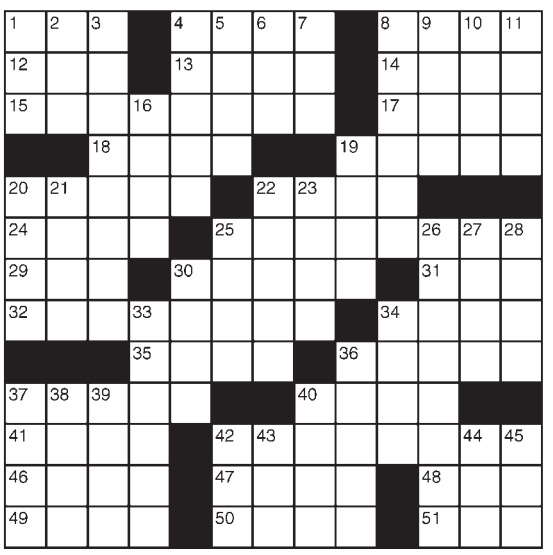
Yesterday's answer 2-24



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: O'Shea Jackson Jr., 32; Billy Zane, 57; Helen Shaver, 72; Edward James Olmos, 76.

Happy Birthday: Draw on experience and map out a plan that helps you gain ground. Don't waste time on something that isn't likely to bring the accolades you desire. Do what you do best and give it a unique twist; someone will take note and buy into your vision. Listen to suggestions, but before you incorporate outside input, find out if there is a cost involved. Your numbers are 5, 17, 23, 28, 33, 37, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* You'll be eager to act and to bring about change, but first, get your strategy in place and your plans in order. A spontaneous change will lack consistency and fall short of expectations. Avoid disappointment; get organized and prepare to flourish. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Emotions will lead to a costly mistake if you act on impulse instead of getting the facts first and figuring out how best to handle a situation. Concentrate on defusing a negative turn of events with a positive and helpful response. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Reach out and touch someone with your kindness, awareness and helpful demeanor, and you will find common ground and an innovative plan that will encourage success. Celebrate with someone special and share your intentions. Update your image, and compliments will follow. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Simplify your plans and take on a challenge that will make a difference to you and your community. What you do to help others will positively impact your profile and help you connect with people who can help you make your vision a reality. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Stretch your mind, awareness and plans to meet your demands, but don't spend more than you can afford. Maintain balance, and strive to fix rather than replace something that isn't working for you. Self-improvement and romance are encouraged. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Wasting time on nonsense will make you angry. Get organized and plan your day to meet your expectations. Take a unique approach to relationships and be willing to meet in the middle on topics that can lead to positive change and better connections. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Focus on what's happening in your community. Participate in events that are conducive to connecting with people who share your drive, determination and direction. Don't take a risk with your health or finances. Romance will enhance a special relationship. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Control your emotions to avoid mistakes. A decision someone close to you makes will have you questioning your relationship. Look for a creative or physically challenging project that will motivate you to do as you please, regardless of how others live. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Live life your way. Don't let negative people disrupt your plans or meddle in your affairs. Pay attention to what loved ones need and want, and do your best to help. Honest rhetoric will put things in perspective and encourage more success. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Avoid unstable or unpredictable individuals. Take pride in what you do and concentrate on your vision, not someone else's. An unexpected turn of events will make you second-guess your next move. Focus on home, family and what makes you feel secure. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Be honest, and you'll sidestep getting involved in something that doesn't interest you. Attend an event that can offer new beginnings and partnerships with people heading in a similar direction. A past partner will come to mind. Proceed with caution. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Put your anger to rest and concentrate on improving your life. Added convenience will make it easier to handle change and initiate your next move. Consider an expert opinion but, in the end, do what works best for you. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are versatile, proactive and open-minded. You are a visionary and a leader.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		6			9		5	
		7				8		
4	2	5	8			7		
		3			1		9	4
								1
9					5		7	
	6		3				8	
7		9			8	1	2	
	1	2	5					

Difficulty: ★★★★ 2-24

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	8	6	3	4	9	7	2	1
9	2	3	7	1	6	5	4	8
4	1	7	2	5	8	6	3	9
1	3	8	5	9	7	2	6	4
6	4	2	8	3	1	9	5	7
7	9	5	6	2	4	8	1	3
2	7	9	4	6	3	1	8	5
8	5	4	1	7	2	3	9	6
3	6	1	9	8	5	4	7	2

Difficulty: ★★★ 2-23

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

JOHN ANISTON (1933-2022) **Solution: 10 letters**

N	S	T	A	B	M	O	C	J	K	A	J	O	K	L
A	E	E	S	T	A	R	T	R	E	K	H	I	S	I
V	R	L	A	L	E	X	A	N	D	E	R	E	O	E
Y	V	L	E	T	O	R	O	T	C	I	V	A	A	U
D	E	Y	E	H	J	O	H	N	A	I	L	U	P	T
A	D	Ⓨ	Ⓜ	Ⓜ	Ⓔ	L	U	K	L	L	O	A	O	E
Y	N	O	H	T	N	A	I	R	E	F	M	T	P	N
T	I	R	C	T	N	S	U	T	F	E	A	S	E	A
I	K	E	R	S	I	O	S	I	T	D	R	U	R	N
M	S	Z	A	R	F	R	C	B	N	L	Y	G	A	T
E	I	N	E	O	E	E	E	Y	M	O	E	B	R	T
B	N	A	S	W	R	O	T	C	A	C	E	O	T	I
R	N	Y	C	N	A	N	T	O	N	I	O	S	S	P
A	A	N	A	S	T	A	S	S	A	K	I	S	A	N
D	Y	R	R	E	H	S	U	N	S	H	I	N	E	C

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Actor, Alexander, Anastassakis, Anthony, Antonios, Arts, Boss, Brad, Case, Cold, Combat, Crete, Days of Our, Daytime, Emmy, Greek, Gustau, Heat, Helen, Jennifer, John, Kind, Kiriakis, Kojak, Lieutenant, Little, Lives, Mary, Nancy, Navy, NBC, Officer, Pitt, Search, Served, Sherry, Soap Opera, Star Trek, Stella, Sunshine, Telly, Victor, Worst, Yannis, Zero

Yesterday's Answer: Jalapeño

The NEW **Volume 70** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

NBA teams get ready to make 4th-quarter push for playoffs

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

Kevin Durant went to Phoenix. Russell Westbrook moved from Los Angeles to Los Angeles. Kevin Love did what once worked out nicely for LeBron James, taking his talents from Cleveland to Miami. And speaking of James, he says he's about to play some of the biggest games of his career.

The All-Star break ends Thursday.

Let the playoff-push fireworks begin.

"It's not the start of a new season," Miami guard Tyler Herro said. "But I think this is when guys really raise their level of play."

Boston, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Denver, Cleveland and Memphis probably can go ahead and make playoff plans. Houston, Charlotte, San Antonio and Detroit probably can go ahead and start scheduling April vacations.

That leaves 20 teams for 10 playoff spots. Sacramento is in position to end the longest drought in NBA history—16 years and counting—and Cleveland is in line to make the playoffs without someone named LeBron on the roster for the first time since 1998.

"We have a group that's dedicated to winning, and there are certain things we have to learn about each other," Cavaliers guard Donovan Mitchell said. "It's not going to be all sunshine and rainbows with us. We're still a team that's young, but we also are figuring each other out."

The Cavaliers are five games behind Boston, 4 1/2 behind Milwaukee and two behind Philadelphia in the East. The rest of the race might get jumbled; 13th-place Orlando is only four games from a play-in berth.

AP

Team LeBron forward LeBron James (6) dunksduring the first half of the NBA basketball All-Star game Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023, in Salt Lake City.

"We've given ourselves a chance," Magic rookie Paolo Banchero said.

Out West, it's a mess.

"The West is loaded now," Clippers forward Marcus Morris Sr. said. "I don't know how that happened."

Here's how: Durant went to Phoenix. Durant's trade to the Suns could make a team that looked vulnerable anything but vulnerable.

Denver is five games clear of Memphis for the West lead and eight games up on No. 3 Sacramento.

But starting with the Kings, there are 11 teams in the standings—Sacramento, the Los Angeles Clippers (who just got Westbrook, after he was bought out by Utah following a trade with the Lakers), Phoenix, Dallas (now with Kyrie Irving alongside Luka Doncic), New Orleans, Minnesota, Golden State, Oklahoma City, Utah, Portland and the Lakers—separated by just six games.

The seedings could flip every night out West.

"Must-see TV," Morris said.

And James—who just passed Kareem Abdul-Jabbar for the NBA scoring record—says the 23 games the Lakers have left carry incredible significance.

He didn't go to the playoffs last year. He can't envision missing them again.

"I don't want to see myself not being part of the postseason for two years straight. It's just not part of my DNA," James said.

Here's some of what to know for the stretch run:

7 WITH 30

There are seven players—Dallas' Doncic, Philadelphia's Joel Embiid, Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo, Oklahoma City's Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, Portland's Damian Lillard, Boston's Jayson Tatum and James—averaging at least 30 points per game.

If that holds, it'll be an NBA record.

There's been only one season with more than three such players. That was 1961-62, with six — Wilt Chamberlain (50.4), Elgin Baylor (38.3 in 48 games, technically not enough to qualify as a scoring leader), Walt Bellamy (31.6), Bob Pettit (31.1), Oscar Robertson (30.8) and Jerry West (30.8).

IT'S THE FOURTH QUARTER

It's not the second half of the season. It's really the fourth quarter.

An NBA regular season has 1,230 games; 884, or 72%, have been played. So if the season was an NBA game clock, 1:30 would remain in the third quarter.

Teams have somewhere between 21 and 25 games left. Minnesota is down to a league-low eight home games remaining, while Indiana has nine. Washington has a league-high 15 home games left, while Atlanta and Charlotte each have 14.

THE CHAMPS

Golden State will emerge from the All-Star break ninth in the Western Conference.

The defending NBA champion Warriors have some work to do.

No reigning champion has missed the following season's playoffs since the Chicago Bulls didn't get to the postseason in 1999. Before that, it was the Boston Celtics not making the playoffs in 1970.

Those Bulls lost Michael Jordan and Scottie Pippen. Those Celtics lost Bill Russell and Sam Jones.

.590 AND IN

Over the last 20 seasons, there have been 173 teams that reached the All-Star break with a winning percentage of .590 or better.

And 171 of them made the playoffs, or 98.8%.

That's good news for Boston (.712), Milwaukee (.707), Denver (.695), Philadelphia (.667), Cleveland (.623) and Memphis (.614).

The only teams that hit the break with that good of a winning percentage and missed the playoffs were the 2007-08 Warriors and last season's Cavaliers.

The '07-08 Warriors went 16-14 after the break and missed the playoffs by two games. Last season's Cavs went 9-15 after the break, then lost two games in the play-in round.

MILESTONES

Upcoming milestones of note:

■ Miami coach Erik Spoelstra (692) is five wins from passing Red Holzman (696) for 20th place on the all-time list.

■ Durant (26,684) is 27 points from passing Robertson (26,710) for 13th on the all-time scoring list. Durant is 263 points from passing Hakeem Olajuwon (26,946) for 12th.

■ Westbrook (9,002) is 60 assists from passing Isiah Thomas (9,061) for ninth on the all-time list.

■ Paul George of the Clippers is 18 3-pointers from 2,000. He'd be the 14th player to reach that number.

■ Golden State's home game Sunday against Minnesota will be the 6,000th regular-season contest in Warriors' history.

BUSY LA

Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles will be busy — the Lakers and Clippers both have 13 home games to play in the season's final 46 days.

Not one, not two, but three NBA teams play three consecutive games in Los Angeles during March—the Lakers, the Clippers and the Oklahoma City Thunder. They visit the Clippers on March 21 and 23, then visit the Lakers on March 24.

Hawks GM Fields says Snyder a candidate to replace McMillan

ATLANTA (AP)—Atlanta Hawks general manager Landry Fields said Wednesday former Utah coach Quin Snyder is among those being considered to replace Nate McMillan.

The Hawks (29-30) fired McMillan on Tuesday. Fields stressed that Atlanta's eighth-place standing in the Eastern Conference is not acceptable for a team that advanced to the conference finals in 2021.

Snyder, 56, was 372-264 as Utah's coach from 2014-22. He guided the Jazz to six consecutive playoff appearances before stepping down after last season.

Fields said Snyder's availability "is a factor in the sense that I feel comfortable mentioning his name, but there are other candidates I don't want to mention because they are a part of other teams."

Snyder was a Hawks assistant in 2013-14.

Other possible candidates include Golden State assistant Kenny Atkinson and Milwaukee assistant Charles Lee, both former Atlanta assistants.

Fields said he has started talking with potential candidates and could make a hire this season. Assistant coach Joe Prunty began serving as interim coach at practice Wednesday but may not be involved in the interview process for the full-time position.

"To do this now, sort of last minute, there's enough on Joe's plate," Fields said, adding that his message to Prunty is "just focus on the task at hand and we'll cover everything else later."

McMillan, 58, went 99-80 as Atlanta's coach, including a 27-11 record as interim in the second half of the 2020-21 season. His success that season in leading Atlanta to the Eastern Conference finals earned him the full-time position.

The Hawks are hoping for a similar late-season revival under Prunty, but players say consistency and accountability must improve.

"It ain't on Nate McMillan," guard Dejounte Murray said after practice. "We've all got to look in the mirror."

Added center Clint Capela: "It's on all of us. ... Consistency, we just have to be better."

McMillan couldn't follow up on the 2021 success. The Hawks lost to Miami in the first round of the playoffs last season after surviving the play-in tournament.

Hawks forward John Collins said McMillan "was a great coach" but added "we need a different type of guidance" from the next coach.

When asked if accountability from players was lacking under McMillan, Collins said, "Yeah, I definitely feel we can do a better job with that."

Prunty, who has been an NBA assistant coach since 1996, has previous experience as an interim coach. He posted a 21-16 record with Milwaukee after Jason Kidd was fired during the 2017-18 season.

"It definitely helps, for sure, but every situation is different," Prunty said. "... The reality is it's very difficult to make wholesale changes. There may be things that could be tweaked here and there."

Collins described Prunty as "a cool, calm coach, real relaxed."

"I feel we're all comfortable with Joe," Collins said. "Hopefully, it can be a smooth transition."

Atlanta, which plays at home against Cleveland on Friday night, is struggling to remain in the top 10 in the conference for a return spot in the play-in field. The Hawks lost four of six games before the All-Star break and are only one game ahead of 10th-place Toronto in the East.

Fields said he considered a coaching change for one month and was influenced by back-to-back losses to Charlotte and the New York Knicks before the break.

"I do believe there was slippage and I felt that was a need we needed to address," Fields said.

Fields said he did not consult point guard Trae Young or other players before making the move. Fields said speculation that McMillan's efforts were affected by conflicts with Young were unfair to the player and were not a factor in his decision to make a coaching change.

Young was not made available for interviews on Wednesday.

Overall in 19 seasons, McMillan has a 760-668 record with the Seattle SuperSonics, Portland Trail Blazers, Indiana Pacers and Hawks.

SIS, DMS stun opponents in MS boys v-ball

LEIGH GASES

Saipan International School's Moshe Sikkel, right, tries to block a spike attempt from a Grace Christian Academy varsity volleyball player during their game on Tuesday in the continuation of the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Middle School Volleyball League 2022-2023 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan International School Geckos and DanDan Middle School Tottots boys varsity volleyball team stunned their opponents in the continuation of the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Middle School Volleyball League 2022-2023.

The Geckos had a whirlwind three-set game against a worthy adversary, the Grace Christian Academy Eagles, while the Tottots took on the undefeated Tanapag Middle School Tatagas and won in two sets on Tuesday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Right from the get-go, the Geckos and Eagles had their eyes on the prize with back-to-back points landing for both teams.

Led by the tall middle-blocker and main spiker Moshe Sikkel, the Geckos' defense was almost impenetrable, handing the first set win, 21-15.

The Eagles' roster of Maximus Taitano, Rooney Gil, Andy Kim, Michael Miller, Justin Ma, and Kenny Zheng then came back with a vengeance in the second set and mimicked the points from the first set, 21-15.

Then, in the last set, it was a fight to the finish but the Geckos' Daniel and Theo Joab, Nason Wessel, Aiden Camacho, Sikkel, Landon Pudney, and Allan Cabrera put their game into fifth gear and won, 15-7.

This is the fourth win for the Geckos and are now the only undefeated team left in the season.

On the other court earlier in the afternoon, the Tottots took on the undefeated Tatagas and broke their streak after an assail of well placed returns and serves by the rotation of Jordan Agulto, Rodel Apostol, Christopher and Tyler Cruz, Arvin Hornejas, Shayne Ngircheungel, Matthew Peters, Kallan Seidler, Dane Tibayan, Bernard Villagomez, Andrei Viola, Endree Yangilmau, and Joshua Yorormad, won the game in two sets, 21-16, 21-10.

In other results that afternoon, Hopwood Middle School handed the Mount Carmel School Knights their fifth loss after two sets, 21-9, 21-16; Agape Christian School won against ChaCha OceanView Middle School, 21-16, 21-13; and Saipan Community School JV defeated SIS JV, 21-15, 21-9.

In Pool A standings, TMS and DMS are tied at the lead with 4 wins and 1 loss; SCS is still 2-2; HMS is at 2-3; and MCS have yet to win with 5 losses.

In Pool B Standings, SIS leads with their 4 wins; Agape Christian School is at 3-1; GCA is 3-2; FMS is still 1-2; and COVMS have yet to win with 4 losses.

In the junior varsity standings, HMS has 2 wins; DMS has a 2-1 card; and SCS is 1-1; COVMS has 1 loss; and SIS has 2 losses.

COLIN

From Page 24

6-3, 13-11.

"So, you know, Bobby's tired today because he just finished his semifinals this morning. I hope today gave him another objective to strive for. We're always trying to push each other to become better tennis players. So, I hope this helps motivate him," said Ramsay.

The ease that he beat Cruz was in complete contrast to the struggle he faced in beating up-and-coming netter David Kwon in the semifinals, 7-6(8), 3-6, 10-5, the day prior.

On playing and serving as tournament director at the same time, Ramsay said he couldn't be more thankful for Jeff Race's sacrifices all these years.

"I don't really understand how much work he's been putting in all these years. I found it difficult. The past few matches where it's tough to stay present and totally be concentrated in the match which is required at this level. But as a director, I'm still thinking of other matches that still need to go on if we're behind or ahead of schedule. Seeing if everything is under control. So I had to talk to myself a lot to refocus and it worked well today," said Ramsay.

Cruz, for his part, said he really wanted to beat Ramsay and even jokingly alluded to his friend using his tournament director position to set the finals a few hours after his semifinals.

"I want to beat him. I was hoping that he'd have a mental breakdown. I don't care if he loses… I think Colin cheated and I really feel like he used it (being tourney director) to his advantage," he said in jest.

Striking a serious tone, Cruz said he didn't really think he could've done anything against Ramsay last Monday.

MARK RABAGO

Colin Ramsay, right, and Bobby Cruz meet at the net before the start of their men's open finals in the White Coconut Classic Tennis Tournament last Monday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

"I feel like he's been in the zone. He's really lifted his level. He's better than when he played in Fiji (Pacific Nations Cup) and in the Pacific Mini Games," he said.

Elliott, meanwhile, didn't waste any time in winning the women's open finals after dominating Serin Chung, 6-1, 6-1.

It was sort of sweet revenge for Elliott as Chung beat her in the last tournament, the SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament.

When asked if she was looking for payback in their finals match, Elliott said, "Yeah, kinda but I see it like more of a friendly match."

She admitted though that she didn't really do anything special in the runup to the Coconut Classic.

"This tournament was my practice. I haven't trained since the last tournament"

"I think my backhand really worked for me because that is my strongest point," she also answered when asked what was working for her during the one-sided finals

Elliott dedicated the championship to her parents and also made a shoutout to organizers of the Coconut Classic.

Unseeded Simon Tang ruled the men's 4.0 after beating third seed Wataru Kadokura, 2-6, 6-1, 10-4.

In the men's 3.0, Dev Bachani is dominating a new sport after triumphing against Matthew Hwang, 6-3, 7-5.

Jinho Cody Park won the boys 12 after the top seed turned back Haoyang Song, 7-6 (2), 6-4.

In the girls 12, Stella Choi took the tiara with an immaculate 5-0 win-loss card.

The boys 14 had No. 1-ranked Nason Wessel register a walkover win in the finals against No. 2 Yutaka Kadokura.

Henry Choi edged Siwoo Lee in the round-robin boys 16, while Hoo Wang won the girls 16 after beating both her opponents in the division.

In the men's 40, Paul Jang also finished with a perfect 2-0 record to win the championship.

In the mixed-up doubles, Ramsay teamed up with Taher Shakir to win the finals against Cruz and Daniel Kang, 7-5, 6-3.

The 2023 White Coconut Classic Tennis Tournament was organized by the Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association and sponsors include White Coconut Computer and Tan Holdings. Organizers also thanked the American Memorial Park and Crowne Plaza Saipan for the use of their tennis courts.

NMIFA

From Page 24

by Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, NMIFA president Jerry Tan, Sen. Dennis Mendiola (R-Rota), NMIFA vice president Vickie Izuka, NMIFA executive committee member Alex Sablan, along with family and friends of the team.

On behalf of Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and himself, Apatang wished the team good luck and said "the CNMI should be proud of our women's football team and should be proud of their great progress to enter competition away from home with other strong teams… I know you have trained hard and you will raise the CNMI flag with confidence and pride… We wish you many goals."

Tan, for his part, said that these send-off ceremonies are always special when the teams are competing and traveling to far places.

He said the team has worked so hard to get where they are and "I want to recognize the sacrifice that everybody's involved in preparing for a national team. It may seem easy but it took years of preparation. They have come out and spent so many hours here on this pitch."

He added that he played against the team and had a taste of how good they were. Tan did mention how strong the other teams are considering they have a longer history of football, "so for NMI to be able to have the opportunity to compete, I'm really happy for our girls."

He then thanked the parents for their support and said that many of the players came up in the grassroots soccer program since they were 9 years old or younger. He also thanked AFC for including NMI in the competition and also thanked the team officials for preparing the team and taking care of them.

Izuka, Sablan, and Mendiola—the father of goalkeeper Deseha Mendiola—

LARRY

From Page 24

"I think I stayed focused. Of course I managed my swing and everything basically and when I make a mistake I correct it. The weather was beautiful and the greens were excellent."

The 20-handicapper from Papago added that he was lucky he got hot on Day 2 of the Ace of Aces.

"On the first day with a 92 gross which was pretty much my average score and you're not going to win with that 92 alone. But I thought I need to improve that and use different techniques like my swing and stay focused and don't let anything interfere… You have to set your mind when you want to score a hole well. It's all about course management. I also really enjoy watching the PGA Tour. Bottom line I think I learned a lot from watching the Tour."

Deleon Guerrero dedicated the 2022 SGA championship to the usual suspects.

"Of course I want to dedicate this to my wife and family and of course my comrades at SGA and officers. I want to give them great gratitude for successfully organizing this 2022 Ace of Aces."

Nick Sablan came in second to Deleon Guerrero in the Ace of Aces with a net 143 (75-68). He actually tied with Joe I. Sablan but won via scorecard tiebreaker. The latter carded scores of 79-64 in the two rounds. Third place went to Ed Sablan with his net 150 (71-79).

In the closest to the pin on Day 1, Nick Sablan took the cake in hole No. 13, while the longest drive went to Rick Kautz in holes No. 2 and 18.

In the January Ace of the Month Tournament held on Round 2 last Jan. 29, Roxy Salas won with a net 63 (86 gross, 44-42), who edged Deleon Guerrero on a proverbial scorecard tiebreaker with Joe I. Sablan completing the Top 3 with his net 64.

Closest to the pin winners were Das Krishnan (hole No. 4), Kautz (hole No. 6), Deleon Guerrero (hole No. 11), and Joe I. Sablan (hole No. 15).

The latter also topped the longest drive on hole No. 3 with Krishnan bringing the lumber in hole No. 18. last month.

NMSA knows importance of having swimming pool

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MARK RABAGO
Participants of Tan Holdings 50th Anniversary Swim Meet pose with Tan Holdings executives and Northern Mariana Islands Swimming Federation officials after a $5,000 donation was made by the Tan Siu Lin Foundation last Saturday at the Civic Center Beach.

Northern Marianas Sports Association president Jerry Tan understands the challenges CNMI swimmers are going through since the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi closed in 2018.

"As John [Northern Mariana Islands Sports Federation vice president John Hirsh] said, swimming has experienced a lot of hardship for almost five years now. And John and I both sit on the Northern Marianas Sports Association board and I wanted to share this with the swimming community that we are always constantly reviewing what we can do as far as a swimming pool is concerned," he said during the awards ceremony of last Saturday's Tan Holdings 50th Anniversary Swim Meet.

In the meantime, Tan said he is thankful that local swimmers have adjusted and are now using the open water to train and host competitions.

"I heard the open ocean is just as good if not better, but I think we need to have both, right? So congratulations to all the swimmers for not giving up the sport in spite of the challenges. I am fully aware that swimming is one of the best sports you can really participate in and I do swim but not too much on the ocean for me," he said.

He also thanked the organizing NMISF for helping to celebrate Tan Holdings' 50th anniversary, noting though that the company actually was established in 1972 and they're carrying over the celebrations to 2023 to allow his father, Tan Siu Lin, to travel to Saipan

"Just like the Olympics we delayed a little bit of our celebration continuing into 2023… We want to wait for my dad to be able to travel. They just lifted the restrictions in Hong Kong…If the Olympics can be delayed for one year, we can delay one year, right?" added Tan.

Hirsh, meanwhile, thanked Tan and Tan Holdings as well as its charitable arm, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, for the $5,000 donation that was turned over after the ocean swim.

"We want to thank Tan Holdings for their financial support. These last four years have been very difficult for swimming. We lost our pool in 2018 and there's been an incredible level of perseverance from the parents, coaches, from the clubs, and of course on the swimmers to keep swimming. You guys are stronger than ever and we are incredibly grateful for everybody coming out and participating."

Catherine Attao-Toves, Tan Holdings vice president for Corporate Affairs/Human Resources, said on behalf of Tan Holdings and the Tan Siu Foundation, they would like to express their deep appreciation to NMISF board member and Saipan Swim Club coach Richard Sikkel.

"He's been a partner in planning this out and helping us learn how to do this event. This is the first time that we've done a swimming event like this and to understand the logistics was a great experience. And so we really want to thank all of you guys for coming out and participating and celebrating our 50th anniversary. Like boss Jerry shared, we're doing this celebration with all the different sports associations and the whole intention is not only to give thanks to the community, but also to celebrate with all community members through sports…So like boss Jerry said, continue to swim, continue to stay active, and we just really appreciate each and every one of you."

Devero, Esdrelon named Finals MVPs

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

For leading their respective Blue Haus teams to the championship of the open and masters divisions, Ivan Devero and Elmer Esdrelon were named Finals MVPs of the recent Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League.

Devero scored 10 points, but none more important than the crucial free throws he scored at crunchtime in Blue Haus' 64-62 conquest of Chang Ming Market in the open division of the LSA league last Sunday at the Koblerville Basketball Court.

Esdrelon, meanwhile, brandished his vintage form scoring 23 points in Blue Haus' 76-67 win against JSN Construction earlier in the two-game finals also last Sunday.

In the regular season MVP race, NAPA Auto Parts' Preston Basa and JSN Construction's Jorge De Guzman got the nod for the open and masters divisions, respectively.

Joining Basa in the mythical team were Blue Haus guard Douglas Schmidt and center Marlon De Dios, JTM Saipan center Jonel Broncano, and Chang Ming Market forward Juan Camacho.

Aside from De Guzman also making the mythical team in the masters division were Esdrelon and his teammate Junar Guiab, Vizion Insurance guard Fradel Sedillo, and JSN Construction forward Jun Tabora.

Best coach was Guiab for the masters and Dan Chan of Blue Haus for the open division. For the sportsmanship award, Pepoys Cafe got the vote in the open. Ditto for Legends Elite in the masters.

Meanwhile, league commissioner Sonny Ebuen thanked all participating teams for making the first season of the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League a success.

Teams in the open division were champion Blue Haus, second place Chang Ming Market, third place JTM Saipan, fourth place NAPA Auto Parts as well as Vizion Insurance, Marianas Health Services, Pepoys Cafe & Restaurant, Padrinos Tuesday Club, Al-Ger Manpower, and Pacific Best Choice.

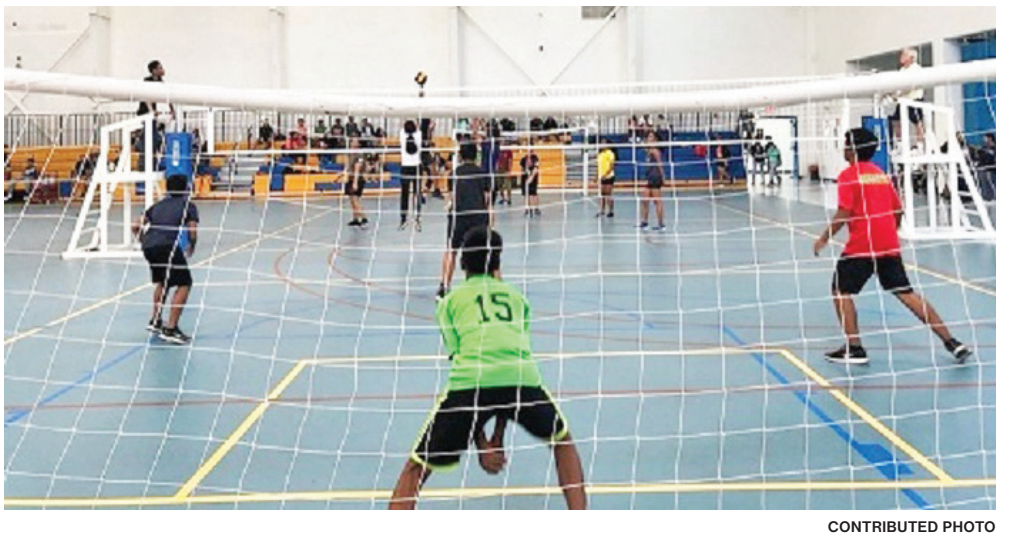
Champion Blue Haus, runner-up JSN Construction, second runner-up Vision Insurance, and third runner-up Legends Elite make up the masters field.

Ebuen also thanked Rollers Basketball Association and its president Juan Dela Cruz for allowing them the use of the Koblerville Basketball Court as well as Armatech Corp. for donating the trophies.

MARK RABAGO
Blue Haus' Elmer Esdrelon accepts the Finals MVP awards trophy of the masters division of the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League.

MARK RABAGO
Blue Haus' Ivan Devero accepts the Finals MVP awards trophy of the opens division of the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League.

3 teams tied atop Roccball standings



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tomodachi, Nakama, and Lotus all have 5-win and 1-loss cards atop the 2023 Roccball League at Marianas High School.

After six rounds of competition there is a three-way tie for first place in the 2023 Roccball League at Marianas High School.

Teams Tomodachi, Nakama, and Lotus all have 5-win and 1-loss cards. Tomodachi gave Nakama their first loss of the season, 41-24. Lotus defeated Dusty Feetz, 36-29, to round out a three-way for first place.

With only one more round of the regular season to go, if Tomodachi, Nakama, and Lotus win their last games, there will be a three-way playoff for the best 2-out-of-3 championship games. In a three-way tie, the team that scored the most game points during the regular season will get to sit out and wait to challenge the winner of a one-game playoff between the second and third place teams.

The heavy hitter of Round 6 for the boys was Jerome Manzon of Tomodachi with 4 aces, 2 kees, and 1 goal for 15 points in addition to the court points he scored. Meghan Sumor of I Hit That was the heavy hitter for the girls with 2 aces and 1 kee for 6 points in addition to the court points she scored. ***(PR)***

NBA teams get ready to make 4th-quarter push for playoffs

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NMSA knows importance of having swimming pool

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Colin, Hye Jin go nuts in Coconut Classic

Ramsay

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Colin Ramsay got into the zone to beat good friend and fellow national player Bobby Cruz, while Hye Jin Elliott needed only around 20 minutes to dispose of Serin Chung in the open divisions of the 2023 White Coconut Classic Tennis Tournament last Monday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Ramsay, who also served as tournament director, beat Cruz, 6-1, 6-1, in one of the most dominant performances from the first seed.

He said despite the lopsided score, Cruz gave him a worthy match especially when his Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 and Pacific Nations Cup 2022 teammate broke him in the second set.

"I'm trying to win the best that I can and play the best that I can. And I was just firing away today and it all kept working for me. I'm very happy about my performance today. Bobby and I play a lot regularly at AMP just for fun," he said.

Ramsay went up 4-0 in the first set before Cruz got a service game in. Cruz also was down 0-4 in the second before surprisingly beating Ramsay's service game.

Cruz, the No. 3 seed, played Ramsay in the men's open finals not three hours after beating No. 2 Tomas Abel in a protracted semifinals, 4-6,

See COLIN on Page 22

Elliott

NMIFA holds send-off ceremony for U20 women's team

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

For the first time since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020, the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association is sending a women's team to compete in the Asian Football Confederation.

The NMI U20 Women's National Soccer Team was sent off with good luck and well wishes for their trip to Palestine in the Middle East last Wednesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

The team will compete in the AFC U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers from March 10 to March 12.

There are eight groups in the qualifiers and the top finisher in each group will advance to the 2024 AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup to be hosted by Uzbekistan in March 2024.

NMI will have two matches, with the first team they will go up against is home team Palestine on March 10. They will then square off against Nepal on March 12. The team will begin their long journey on March 1 and will arrive on March 5.

The team consists of 20 players: Mia Abuan, Allyssya Angeles, Christina Atalig, Joselynn Atalig, Nathanette Blas, Erish Carreon, Jannah Casarino, Aubrey Castro, Audrey Castro, Andrei Chavez, Julie Chavez, Megan Elayda, Stephanie Flores, Tamia Kileleman-Hix, Tyana Kileleman-Hix, Deseha Mendiola, Pia Ngewakl, Sophia Quintos, Cassie Regan, and Rizza Relucio.

They will be joined by Luam Khen Koo, head of delegation; Chi Ming Tang, head coach; Mae Ito, assistant coach; Ronnel Ocanada, assistant coach; Mikky Vargas, communications manager; Hazel Mabasa, team doctor; Catherine Attao-Toves, team manager; and Yu Hung Lee, assistant team manager.

The ceremony was attended

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LEIGH GASES

The NMI U20 Women's National Soccer Team players along with the team officials, pose for a photo during their send-off ceremony to the AFC U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Palestine on Wednesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Larry owes championship to mentors

Deleon Guerrero

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Larry Deleon Guerrero paid tribute to his golf mentors after winning the Saipan Golfers Association 2022 Ace of Aces Tournament championship last month.

The 67-year-old former lawmaker topped the two-round year-end tournament with a net 135. He shot his average of net 72 in the first round last Jan. 28 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort east course before firing a net 63 in the second round on Jan. 29 on the west course.

Deleon Guerrero picked up the sport about 10 years ago and thanked the pillars of golf on the island for all their support and encouragement.

"AG (Attorney General Edward) Manibusan, Ray Salas, Nick Sablan, Ray San Nicolas, Joe I. Sablan, and my brother Tony, they're really the ones who enticed me to join the SGA. I give those guys a lot of credit for teaching me and encouraging me to get into the sport," he said.

On winning the Ace of Aces, Deleon Guerrero attributed this to his concentration and course management.

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